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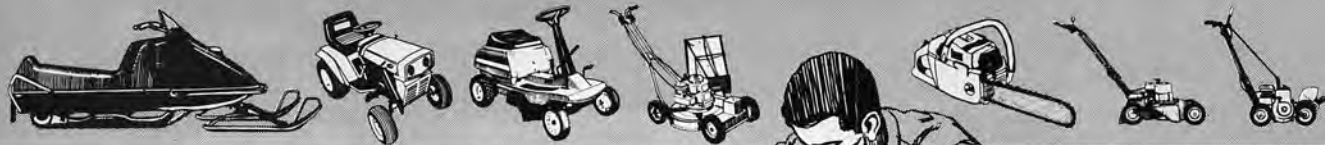
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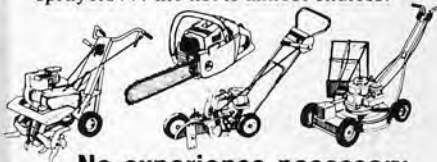
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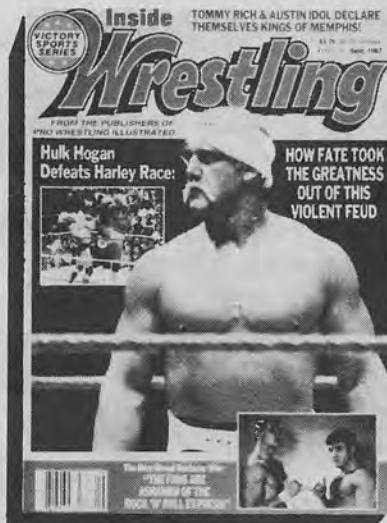
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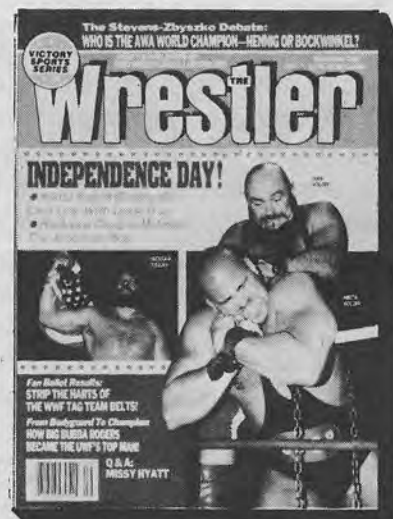
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LETTERS

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MACHO'S MADNESS?

This letter is addressed to all the people who have recently become Randy Savage supporters: "Wake up!" Randy Savage might temporarily be a so-called fan favorite, but how long do you think it will possibly last? Savage is an obsessive man, and at present he is obsessed with the Intercontinental title. He's an emotional cripple without it, and perhaps that's why he's now turned to the fans for support. Once Savage gets the belt back from an undeserving Honky Tonk Man (and he will), he'll lose whatever bit of sanity he seems to have shown. His proven insanity will make a comeback and his "act" with Elizabeth will come to a close. There are a few exceptions in wrestling, but none can be made for the madman known as "The Macho Man."

ED TOBAR
Spring Hill, FL

So "The Macho Man" is now a fan favorite. La-dee-dah! I beg to differ. Just what the WWF needed—another "glitzy" character with a good physique but few wrestling skills to match. In short, another Hulk Hogan.

"But he's got such a punishing, brawling style!" I can almost hear all the little babies crying. Actually, his



Randy Savage pulls The Honky Tonk Man off the mat. The "Macho Man's" new alliance with Hulk Hogan has drawn some sharp comments on both sides of the issue.

"brawling" style is just a cover-up for either a lack of, or refusal to use, scientific skills. His "flying elbow" (what a jerky, overrated move) looks spectacular, but it doesn't lead to pinfalls that win matches. When Savage uncorks a dropkick or sunset flip or uses a backslide or a small package, then I'll be impressed. Until then, his whole act (the man speaks like a mental arthritic) is just a colossal bore.

When you compare him to Ricky Steamboat on one hand, or Brett Hart on the other, this "Macho Madness" falls into place. Both of these men are just as tough and quick as the "Macho Man," but each knows—and uses—at least 10 times as many holds. Each would be better for Elizabeth. But then again, I guess Savage is lucky—anybody would look good compared to The Honky Tonk Man.

RON TAGGIRT
Altoona, PA

I am writing this letter in response to what took place on the recent *Saturday Night's Main Event*, when Hulk Hogan came to the rescue of Randy Savage. Well, in my opinion, there go all future title shots for Savage. You don't win the heavyweight title by being on the side of Hogan. And, in my opinion, the Intercontinental title is a second-best belt. Savage, you're a very fine wrestler who has been my favorite since he came into the WWF. You got very far in a short time by living by your own rules. I think you should turn on Hogan—then just maybe you'll end up in the main event at WrestleMania IV.

ART PAGAN III
Roslyn, PA
(Continued on page 48)



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WHAT'S HAPPENING!

By BILL APTER

RICK MARTEL AND **Tito Santana**, the popular high-flying tag team known as Strike Force, completed their meteoric rise to the top of the WWF by defeating **Brett Hart** and **Jim Neidhart**, **The Hart Foundation**, for the World tag team belts. The match took place before a sellout crowd at the War Memorial Auditorium in Syracuse, New York. The victory came on October 27, nine months and one day after the Harts defeated **The British Bulldogs** for the title.

The win was especially ironic for Martel, who won the match for Strike Force when Neidhart submitted to a Boston crab. Back on December 29, 1985, Martel lost the AWA World heavyweight championship when he submitted to a **Stan Hansen** Boston crab, a move whose counter is well-known and which is no longer considered an effective finishing maneuver.

Strike Force was in control of this match from the opening bell. Martel and Santana like to wrestle at a fast pace while the Harts prefer a slower, rougher style. Martel used a series of aerial maneuvers to weaken Neidhart, and after five minutes had him rolled up for a pin. Neidhart managed to kick out, but Martel took him down again for another pin attempt.



Tito Santana and Rick Martel—now known as Strike Force—beat The Hart Foundation on October 27 to win the WWF World tag team title. Martel forced Jim Neidhart to submit with a Boston crab, the move which cost Martel the AWA World belt in 1985.

Hart then ran into the ring hoping to save the title, but Santana joined in to even things up. Tito whipped "The Hitman" into the ropes and out of the ring, then joined with Martel to double-body-slam Neidhart. Thoroughly exhausted, "The Anvil" was in no position to withstand Martel's Boston crab.

At press time, it appeared that the Harts would be granted a series of rematches. The WWF's general policy to not grant fan favorite challengers title matches against fan favorite champions figures to hurt **The British Bulldogs** and **The Rougeau Brothers**. **The Islanders**, who have battled Strike

(Continued on page 54)

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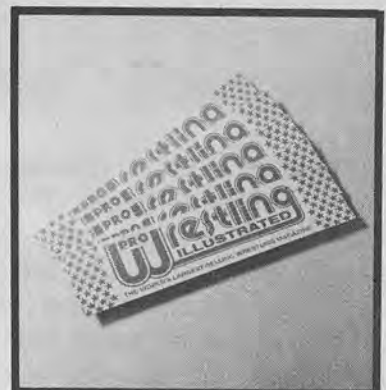
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REPORTS

Marietta, GA (Correspondent—Lenis Sargent): The remarkable main event at the Cobb County Civic Center was billed as "The Rematch That Never Was" as Sgt. Slaughter faced archrival Iron Sheik for the first time in nearly three years. Jerry Blackwell was named special referee.

Apparently, the hatred between the two has not cooled down, as Sheik attacked Slaughter when he entered the ring. Sheik obviously wanted to end the bout quickly, and he was relentless in his initial offensive. But the Sarge delivered a strong blow to the Sheik's abdomen and the Sheik let his guard down, enabling Slaughter to go to work on the Iranian.

The action see-sawed back and forth until Sheik caught Slaughter in an abdominal stretch, at which point things did not look good at all for the Sergeant. After being immobilized in the hold for at least 90 seconds, Slaughter managed to break free. He caught a breather for a few seconds, then reeled the Sheik with a powerful clothesline. As the Sheik finally got to his feet, the Sarge slapped on his infamous Cobra Clutch sleeperhold. Just as the Sheik was about to submit, Comrade Busich ran in the ring and hit Slaughter from behind, thus earning a disqualification from Black-



The Iron Sheik gloats as Sgt. Slaughter lies nearly unconscious at the conclusion of their long-awaited match in Georgia. Special referee Jerry Blackwell disqualified the Sheik for outside interference.

well for the Iranian.

In other bouts: Bruiser Brody beat Abdullah the Butcher by countout ... Luke Graham & Grizzly Boone defeated John Michaels & Steve Lawler ... Jerry Oates pinned Mr. Olympia ... Chick Donovan pinned Ken Timbs ... The Nightmare pinned Comrade Busich ... Mighty Igor pinned Bucky Siegler.

Bayamon, Puerto Rico (Correspondent—Raul Alzaga): The 14th anniversary of the World Wrestling Council featured a huge card held in three different locations in Puerto Rico: Loubriel Sta-

dium in Bayamon, Pachin Vicens Coliseum in Ponce, and the Recreation Sports Palace in Mayaguez. Four matches were held in each arena, while the other eight matches were shown on giant screens to a total crowd of 40,000.

One of several main events of the evening was a no-disqualification match between Invader I and the hated Chicky Starr. If the Invader lost the match, he would have to retire from wrestling, and if Chicky Starr lost, he would lose his hair. If there was no winner after the 15-minute time-limit had expired, the Invader would still have to retire.

The match began with Invader punching Starr and trapping him in a small package, but he only received a two-count. Invader continued with his punches and failed with another small package. Invader then got Starr in a figure-four, then a sleeperhold, as the 15-minute deadline approached. Starr came back and threw Invader to the ropes, but before rebounding, the Invader took a foreign object out of his trunks, placed it in his mask, and gave Chicky a flying headbutt to stun him and gain the pin. The Fantastics ran to the ring to help the Invader cut Chicky's hair, accom-

(Continued on page 58)

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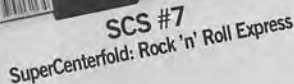
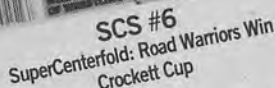
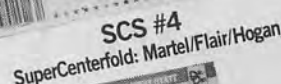
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Alternate choices

Q: "My question is for Curt Hennig: You know just as well as I do that you are the true AWA World champion. At this point, who do you think is your top challenger for the title?"—Carol Hempe, Prentice, WI

A: "Old age. Considering the way I consistently outclass all of my opponents, I think the title will be mine for as long as I can manage to walk out to the ring," said the AWA champion. "I mean, just look at Wahoo McDaniel—the man is as old as the Black Hills of South Dakota and just as ugly. No siree, Father Time has taken care of him, but he's still got a long way to go before he beats me."

Q: "My question is for The Honky Tonk Man: What makes you think that you're the best Intercontinental champion ever? I mean, we're talking about some of the greatest wrestlers ever to step into the ring when we discuss this elite group."—Michael Pratt, Buffalo, NY

YOU ASKED US

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Questions will be answered only in this column and at our discretion.

A: Only once, in a ringside interview, has the Honky Tonk Man ever attempted to give reasons why he considers himself the greatest Inter-

continental champion of all time: "Number one: although it has nothing to do with wrestling, because of the way I can sing and dance. Number two: because of this man standing right by my side, manager Jimmy Hart . . ." Unfortunately, that was as far as The Honky Tonk Man ever got, as former Intercontinental champion Randy "Macho Man" Savage came out from the dressing room and a heated argument ensued.

Q: "My question is for Kevin Sullivan: Now that you seem to be looking at the bright side of things, is there anything you regret having done in the past?"—David Cernic, Boca Raton, FL

A: Upon being roused from a deep meditation session, wrestling's mas-



The Honky Tonk Man thinks he's the greatest Intercontinental champion ever, but few would agree. Randy Savage prevented Honky Tonk from explaining why he's the best.



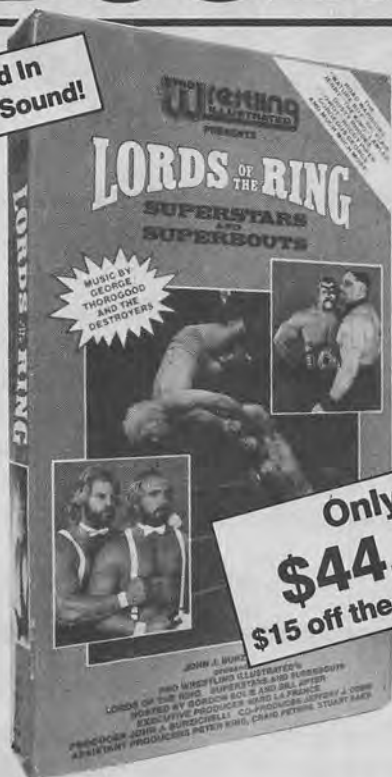
Kevin Sullivan kicks J.J. Dillon in the groin. Sullivan says he has no reason to regret anything he has done in the past, no matter how strange it may have been.

ter of the metaphysical gave the following answer: "Your query is but a futile attempt to impede the unstoppable and fateful flow of the space-time continuum. There is no past, only the inexorable march forward to future knowledge, power, and self-realization. This is the most inescapable fact that will for-

(Continued on page 52)

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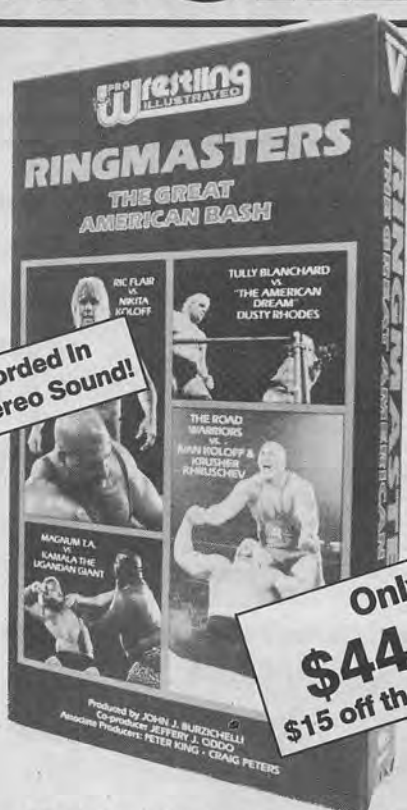
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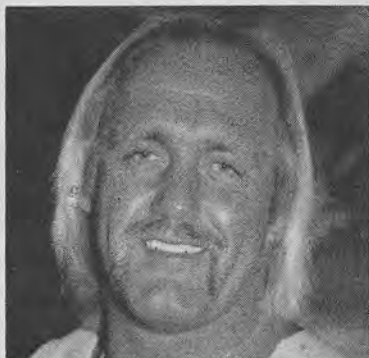
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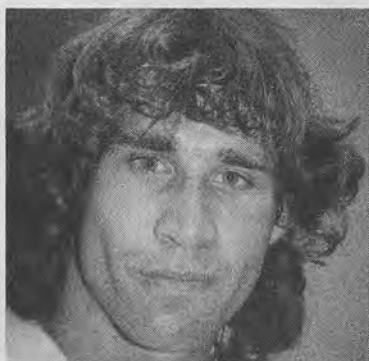
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Thumbs Up

Each issue, *The Wrestler* will praise the noteworthy and damn those who violate the honor of wrestling. The praiseworthy receive a Thumbs Up, the disgraceful are marked with a Thumbs Down. Here is this month's roll of honor and shame.



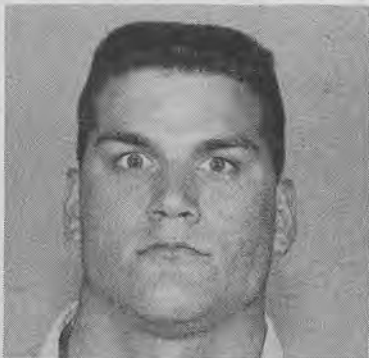
Thumbs Up to Hulk Hogan. Picture the scene: "The Hulkster" is waiting for his title match against Samoan Sika when a hysterical Elizabeth appears and begs him to come out to the ring. When he does, Hulk sees his bitter rival Randy Savage being triple-teamed by The Honky Tonk Man and The Hart Foundation—also his sworn enemies. But instead of turning his back on the scene, "The Hulkster" clears the ring and saves Savage. Afterward, the two bitter rivals decide to forget their differences and shake hands. It was an act worthy of a true champion.



Thumbs Up to Kerry Von Erich. Finally, the former NWA champion has returned to the ring after his long recovery from a 1986 motorcycle accident. His recent sparring session at Texas Stadium went well, though he was limping slightly as he returned to his dressing room. Kerry's leg injury was severe, his rehabilitation was long and frustrating, but at this point we feel confident enough to say he's made it. We look forward to his "official" return on Thanksgiving against Brian Adias.



Thumbs Up to Owen Hart. The budding second-generation superstar has just returned from a highly successful tour of Japan, where he went undefeated while dazzling crowds with his unique combination of high-flying skills and gritty brawling. He engaged in spectacular matches with Keiji Mutoh and Tatsumi Fujinami, two of Japan's best wrestlers. It was an important milestone for the young grappler, who now more than ever seems like the future superstar that everyone claims he will be.



Thumbs Up to Sean Royal. It's a rare breed of man who can turn down a lot of money in order not to forfeit personal ideals, and that's exactly what Royal did when he and partner Chris Champion turned down Jim Cornette's contract offer to manage them. This act of decency has earned them the racket-toting manager's undying hatred, and they will now have to contend with The Midnight Express. You may laugh at The New Breed's claim that they come from the year 2002, but Royal showed that if that is the case, guts and integrity won't be out of style in the 21st century.

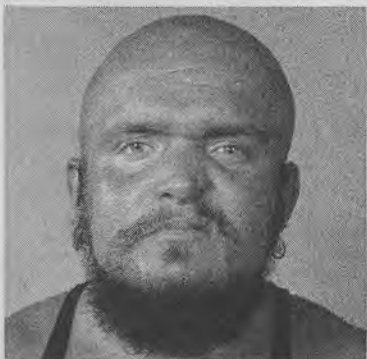
Thumbs Down



Thumbs Down to Jerry Lawler. In a recent match with members of The Commission (a stable of grapplers led by "Prince" Brickhouse Brown), "The King" learned that it's dangerous to play with fire. The match pitted Brown, Carl Fergie, and Don Bass against Lawler, Steve Keirn, and Bill Dundee. Keirn was holding Bass when Lawler released a fireball, but Bass ducked and Keirn caught the fireball in the chest. Mad with pain, Keirn savagely beat up on Lawler. Through carelessness, "The King" has lost a friend and gained a very formidable enemy.



Thumbs Down to Hiro Matsuda. The Japanese grappler was demonstrating a humanly unacceptable level of sadism and brutality when he refused to awaken referee Tommy Young from his "Japanese sleeperhold." When Johnny Weaver entered the ring to save Young, Matsuda viciously attacked him and nearly put him to sleep. Only the timely intervention of Dusty Rhodes halted Matsuda's rampage, as "The American Dream" chased Matsuda out of the ring before reviving his two victims.



Thumbs Down to Boris Zukhov. Though the Russian doesn't have a great many fans, he stooped as low as a man can go when he turned his back on Soldat Ustinov. Together, Zukhov and Ustinov had held the AWA World tag team title, but Zukhov simply abandoned his partner and left the AWA to go to the WWF. Sure, America is a free country, and people are free to change jobs as they wish, unlike in Zukhov's native Russia. But Americans also believe in finishing what they start, a quality that Zukhov, in his zealotry to take advantage of the country he professes to despise, clearly has chosen to ignore.



Thumbs Down to Bobby Heenan. Once again, Heenan has shown that he's ready to ignore both rules and common decency. On a recent WWF telecast, the crafty manager let slip that he will order members of his "family" to avoid tagging off to each other for as long as possible during the 10-man Survivor Series match. While Heenan's strategy may have increased the odds of one of his wrestlers winning the elimination tournament, it destroyed any spirit of cohesion, teamwork, or self-sacrifice on behalf of the teams in the tournament. Even cunning weasels sometimes trap themselves. ☐

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January 1986/20th Anniversary Issue! 10 Greatest Wrestlers, Rhodes, Hogan, Sammartino.

February 1986/Stories include: Hogan, Orndorff, Flair, Hansen.

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November 1984/Stories include: Rhodes, Rich, Hernandez, Warriors.

December 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Warriors, Sullivan, Magnum T.A.

January 1985/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Rhodes, Atlas, Von Erich.

February 1985/Stories include: Rich, Adams, Valiant, Flair.

March 1985/Stories include: Backlund, Billy Jack, Koloffs, Von Erichs.

April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Albano & Hogan, Steamboat, Gordy.

May 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Garvin, Albano, Koloffs.

June 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Slaughter, Von Erichs, Studd & Patera.

July 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Nikita, Warriors.

August 1985/Stories include: Wrestlemania, Zbyszko vs. The Tonga Kid.

September 1985/Stories include: Piper, Flair, Fantastics, Magnum T.A.

October 1985/Stories include: Russian menace, Von Erichs, Rude & Barr.

November 1985/Stories include: Steamboat, Adams, Freebirds, Cornette.

December 1985/Stories include: Santana, Brody, Andersons, Murdoch.

January 1986/Stories include: Steamboat, Mike Von Erich, Warriors.

February 1986/Stories include: R'n'R Express, Warriors, Mulligan & Windham.

March 1986/Stories include: Windham & Rotundo, Warriors-Russians, Rude.

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May 1986/Stories include: Randy Savage, Stan Hansen, Rock 'n' Roll.

June 1986/Stories include: Bulldogs, Windham-Flair, Lance Von, Blanchard.

July 1986/All-American Special Issue. Stories include: Hogan, Slaughter, T.A.

August 1986/Stories include: Wrestlemania 2, Garvins, Martel, Fab Ones.

September 1986/Stories include: Andre, Rhodes-T.A., Adams, Windham.

October 1986/Stories include: Flair-Lugar, Savage, Fantastics, Warriors.

November 1986/Stories include: Warriors-Flair, Bulldogs, Watts, Adams.

December 1986/Stories include: Hogan-Adonis, R&R Express, Baby Doll.

January 1987/Stories include: Rude-Flair, Piper, T.A., Taylor.

February 1987/Stories include: Hogan-Piper-Orndorff, Taylor, Flair.

March 1987/Stories include: Flair, Missy, Luger, Bulldogs, Koloffs.

April 1987/Stories include: Windham, Steamboat, Ellering, Duggan.

May 1987/Stories include: Windham & Luger, Steamboat, Hogan-Andre.

June 1987/Stories include: Piper-Adonis, Horsemen, Adams, Hall, Brody.

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August 1987/Stories include: Dusty & Nikita, Hogan, Mike Von, Cornette.

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October 1987/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan, Taylor-Adams, Lawler.

November 1987/Stories include: War Games, Mr. T, Bulldogs, Rhodes.

December 1987/Stories include: Freebirds, Rhodes, Magnum, Savage, Perez.

January 1988/Stories include: R&R-Horsemen, Hogan, Flair-Garvin.

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INTRODUCING THE TERMINATOR



Another promising rookie has entered the UWF. His name is The Terminator, and he has a secret that neither he nor his manager, Gen. Skandor Akbar, care to divulge. If it became known, it would embarrass one of the sport's biggest stars!

THE PAST 12 months have seen a bumper crop of rookies in the Universal Wrestling Federation. Two newcomers, Big Bubba Rogers and Shane Douglas, both managed to capture titles, the UWF heavyweight and UWF TV titles, respectively.

The subject of this month's "Introducing" column may have failed to capture any straps—yet—but he has earned a fearsome reputation that few rookies have ever equaled.

Six months before Starrcade '87, a burst of "Chi-town heat" arrived in the UWF in the form of a mysterious man known only as The Terminator. Under the guidance of Gen. Skandor Akbar, the clawhold-wielding grappler blew in from The Windy City to sow pain and destruction throughout the UWF.

His true identity remains one of the sport's most closely guarded and tantalizing secrets. The Terminator, according to Akbar, is

the younger brother of one of the biggest mat stars of the last decade, a wrestler whose name most fans—and much of the general public—would recognize in an instant.

While Akbar steadfastly refused to divulge The Terminator's true identity or the name of his brother, he was able to shed some light on the young grappler's origins—and motives.

"Two years ago, a wrestler I admired greatly asked me if I could help train his 18-year-old brother for a mat career," the Mideastern master of mayhem recalled. "He wanted his brother to break into wrestling with the right philosophy and not have his chances for success ruined by the fans' cheers. Only my esteemed self, he thought, could instill in the young man the right combination of wrestling knowledge and utter viciousness we both agreed would be necessary for the young man to rise to the top.

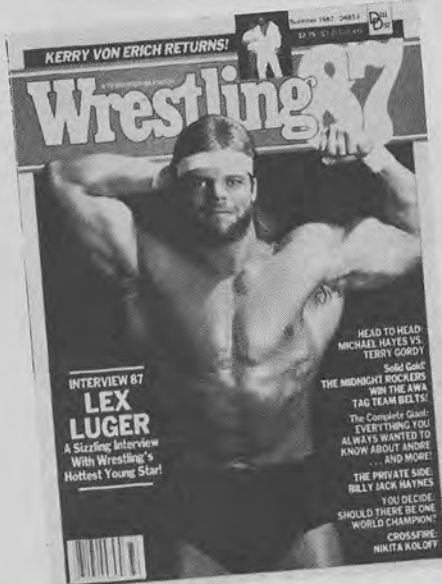
"I was flattered," Akbar continued, "but then the older brother fell into the same trap that he wanted his younger brother to avoid. He started listening to the fans, and the cheers went to his head. But by then it was too late. I had molded The Terminator into a finely tuned instrument of destruction. But his brother wanted

(Continued on page 20)

A powerful new force has invaded the UWF scene. His name is The Terminator, and he is a powerhouse bent on the destruction of any and all wrestlers who may be standing in his path to the top!

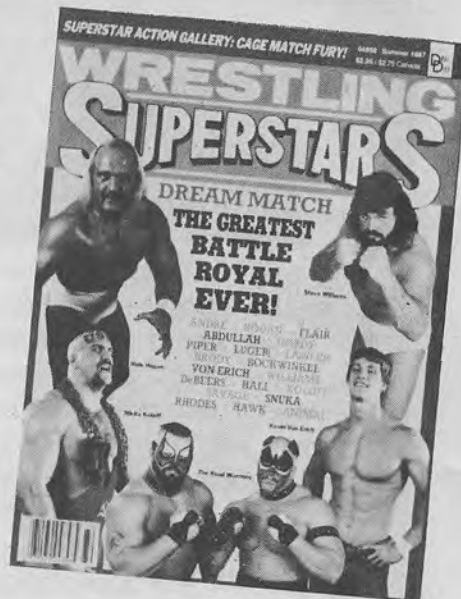
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INTRODUCING

(Continued from page 18)



nothing more to do with him. Such mental discipline and dedication to winning is rare among youth these days, and it was heartening for me to see it. That fact, along with Terminator's incredible physical gifts, convinces me that he is destined for greatness."

In a sport where appearances count, The Terminator has managed to stand out—in looks, in deeds, and in the interest he has sparked. At 6'2" and a rock-solid 270 pounds, The Terminator looks tremendously impressive in his black tights, black war paint, and black leather glove. His equally dark disposition confirms the fact that this rookie is not interested in winning any fashion or popularity contests.

His clawhold is one of the fiercest in the sport. Just ask Michael Hayes, among one of The Terminator's first victims, who emerged dazed and bloodied from a match last summer.

"I know a little bit about clawholds," said Hayes, who has engaged in legendary feuds with the Von Erichs. "But I tell you, this Terminator's claw has the po-

The Terminator twists Michael Hayes (above left) and whips him across the ring (above right). His face a mask of black war paint, The Terminator possesses a powerful clawhold that frankly has a lot of wrestlers scared. Many of them suspect the hold's effectiveness is due to a loaded glove, but The Terminator says his great strength makes the hold particularly devastating.

tential to end anyone's career at any time. Not mine, of course, but some other wrestlers should be worried."

These sentiments were echoed by Tim Horner, another one of The Terminator's early victims. In addition, Horner alleged that the black leather glove is loaded with some kind of foreign object that enhances its effectiveness.

"There's no way you can tell me that a normal clawhold can do what it did to me," Horner said. "It's obviously loaded with something."

Gordy, a former UWF heavyweight champion, took a personal interest in stopping The Terminator before he could claim any more victims. The two engaged in a vicious feud, but there was no clear-cut winner. The fact that Gordy is now gone from the UWF while The Terminator remains

shows how tough it will be to defuse this latest threat.

Of course, The Terminator denies that any illegal actions are responsible for his success.

"You just can't give credit where credit is due," he said in a telephone interview. "Gen. Akbar warned me about you guys, and I see he's 110 percent right. Why is my clawhold so effective? Could be the fact that I have 21-inch biceps have anything to do with it? Or the fact that all my opponents have soft heads? Tell me *that*, you desk-bound newshounds! Maybe I'll come up to your office and terminate some of *you* guys for a change. *Argghhhh!*"

He also flatly refused to discuss the rumors about his brother: "I had a brother once, but he's not the one that I used to look up to. He's gone soft in the head, too, so soft that I get disgusted just thinking about it. I tell people now that I'm an orphan, an only child. Now if you'll excuse me, I've got to go out and destroy somebody."

The phone slammed down with a bang. Like so many of his opponents, the call had been abruptly "terminated." □

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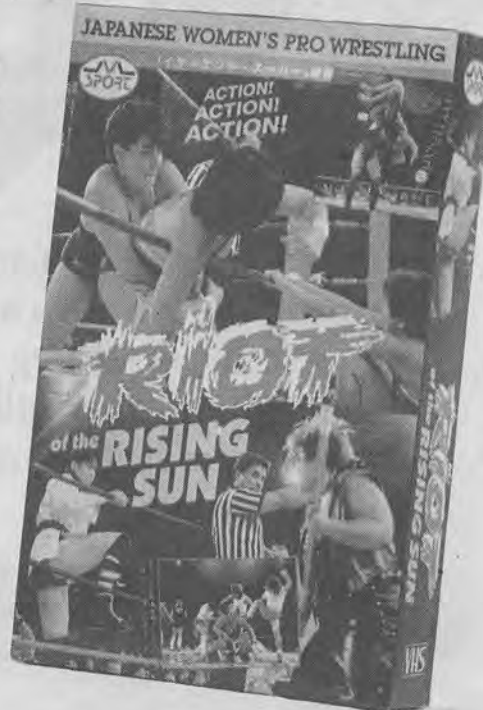
- Wendi Richter & "Devil" Masami vs. Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori & Okumura
- Nancy Kumi vs. Lucy Kayama
- Monster Ripper & "Devil" Masami vs. Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori & Mimi Hagiwara
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Q&A

Each month, *The Wrestler* will present a "Question and Answer" forum with an important figure in the wrestling world. It is your chance to meet wrestling's biggest stars as they answer the questions uppermost in the fans' minds



Eddie Gilbert and Terry Taylor of the self-proclaimed "First Family of Wrestling" are wreaking havoc all over the NWA and UWF. Shortly after Taylor challenged Nikita Koloff to a TV title unification match, he and Gilbert attacked Nikita and stole his belt. Nikita has the strap back, but the match is still on.

Q: Before we talk about Starrcade, I want to ask you about something that's very close to my heart and has bothered me greatly. As you know, I'm not just a reporter, I'm a photographer, too, and I was just appalled by what you did to photographer Jimmy Suzuki. Where do you and Gilbert get off

bullying a defenseless man like that?

A: Hey, cool down, Bill. You have to understand that me and Eddie were doing an interview at the time, a very private, very important interview, and this Jap hound came over with his camera to bother us. Bill, I'm always available for pho-

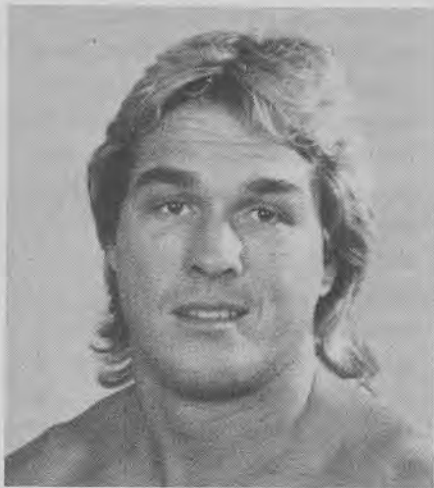
tographs—you know that as well as I do—and I wouldn't have minded if he was just clicking away, but he was pointing that stupid flash right in our eyes. We politely asked him to stop, but he just kept on taking pictures. Besides, I think he's friends with Adams. He got what was coming to him, that's all I can say. Hey, 15 stitches is nothing to a real man. But let me just make a warning to you, Bill: You'd better not ever point that camera of yours in my face while I'm doing an interview, or I'll smash that Nikon right over your bald head.

Q: And you're telling me to cool down? Maybe we'd better get on to another subject, like Starrcade '87, "Chitown Heat," and your title unification match against NWA TV champion Nikita Koloff. A lot of people have said that you've used unfair tactics to psych-out Koloff before the match, such as that incident in which you and Gilbert stole his TV belt.

A: Yes, a great moment.

Q: Care to relate it for us?

A: Absolutely. Koloff was beating up on some bum, like he always does, so I figured I'd give him a taste of what was coming to him at Starrcade. Then Eddie figured he'd join in on the fun, and before we knew it Koloff was laying on the mat unable to move. Well, I figured while we were in there we



TERRY TAYLOR

TERRY TAYLOR HAS been interviewed here and in *The Wrestler's* sister publications many times, but you can forget all about those conversations. The Terry Taylor we're seeing and hearing from now is a totally different person.

No longer does he rely solely on his considerable scientific wrestling abilities to get the job done. No longer does he treat the fans like they're his best friends. He has lost all respect for the rules of the sport, the men who enforce them, and the tradition they uphold. Taylor is a new man.

In this case, new isn't necessarily better. He's aligned himself with Eddie Gilbert and Dick Murdoch, "The First Family of Wrestling." He's broken the rules, sneak-attacked opponents, brutalized innocent photographers, and conspired with Gilbert to steal Nikita Koloff's NWA TV belt.

Taylor, the UWF TV champion, stepped into the national spotlight recently when he challenged Koloff to a UWF-NWA TV title unification match. Their scheduled clash at Starrcade on Thanksgiving was not only one of the most anticipated matches of that annual extravaganza, but also unified NWA stars against UWF grapplers. *The Wrestler* Senior Editor Bill Apter spoke with Taylor about this and other timely topics in an exclusive interview.

might as well take the belt from him, 'cause I was gonna get it soon, anyway. We had no intention of giving it back.

Q: But he got it back anyway.

A: That was a mistake on my part, a rare mistake, but I thought it might be fun to show Koloff what I had. I should have kept the belt under wraps instead of parading it in front of his face.

Q: That was in New Orleans when Dusty Rhodes and Nikita beat the stuffings out of you and Gilbert and got the belt back.

A: A sneak-attack on their part, and very unsportsmanlike, I might add. It really doesn't matter, though, because I'll have no trouble beating Koloff at Starrcade. He doesn't stand a chance.

Q: I must give you credit for one thing: You're the only person who can make The Four Horsemen agree with Dusty Rhodes and Nikita Koloff. This is more than a TV title unification match; it's more like a feud between NWA and the UWF. Even Ric Flair, an archenemy of Koloff's, has said that he's rooting for Nikita, and that's really something.

A: It says something about Flair. It shows how insecure he is, which he *should* be now that he lost the NWA so-called World championship to that prelim bum Ronnie Garvin. I'm glad you brought up Flair, because I have something to



Taylor picks Chris Adams up off the arena floor. Taylor was one of the most well-liked men in the sport until he turned on Adams and others who trusted him. Now Taylor can justify actions like beating up on photographers.

say about him: His career is over. He's too old and over-the-hill, and the only thing he can still do is talk. He thinks he can beat me with one hand tied behind his back? Well, he's out of his mind, because I'm on the rise and he's had it.

Q: If Flair regains the World title

from Garvin, would you challenge him to a match?

A: Well, it only seems fair that if I'm the TV champion of both federations and he's the World heavy-weight champion, I should get a title shot. Of course, you have to figure that Flair'll probably dodge me just like he's dodged every oth-



UWF Commissioner John Ayres demands that Taylor return the NWA TV belt to Nikita (above). Taylor whips Brad Armstrong across the ring (below). After Nikita took the belt back by force, Taylor said he'd have no trouble winning it legitimately.



er contender. It's really a shame that he's fallen to this level, because in his prime, a Taylor-Flair match would've been great. These days it's just a mismatch.

Q: You certainly are a different man from the Terry Taylor I knew just about a year ago. How can one man change so much in a year?

A: Ah, that's where you're wrong, Bill. I *haven't* changed, I've just adapted to my surroundings. Look at what happened to me over the past year or so. I had the UWF tag belts with Hacksaw Duggan, but he deserted me. How the heck did he have the nerve to get involved in a loser-leave-town match against

One Man Gang when he knew that there'd be other people affected if he left? The least the UWF could've done was give me the chance to pick another partner. Let me tell you, it wouldn't have been Adams. The only reason I teamed with him the night of the title tournament was because I saw him as my last chance to get back what had been stolen from me. Thanks to my outstanding wrestling, I succeeded.

Q: Your partnership with Adams didn't quite work out, did it? Looking back, I think it was doomed from the start.

A: Yes, doomed because Adams

couldn't be trusted. Listen, I've talked about this a million times. Adams was a changed man after he got out of jail. He couldn't be trusted, therefore he didn't trust anyone. He just figured everybody else was like himself. How about that night I missed my plane connection and was late for the match? I still got there in time to save his hide, but what does he do? He publicly gets on my case for being late. We could've settled that whole thing in private, but he had to open his big mouth. Then that night we lost the title, I certainly didn't kick his foot off the ropes on purpose when that turn-coat Sting pinned him, but there was no convincing him. That's why I'm glad I'm with Eddie now. I can trust him.

Q: You might be the only person in the world who *does* trust Eddie Gilbert. Even his father doesn't trust him.

A: Tommy Gilbert? You know, it's really a shame when a father disgraces his son the way Tommy Gilbert has. He's just turned his back on Eddie in every possible situation. Eddie has become a great star in this sport, but Tommy refuses to acknowledge the accomplishments of his son. But back to what we were talking about, I started to realize that I was getting nowhere by pandering to the fans and you reporters. I had all this wrestling ability, but I wasn't where I should've been because I refused to mix it up a little, I refused to stretch the rules. The time came for me to become more than a one-dimensional wrestler. The goody-two-shoes in this sport never get anywhere.

Q: Yes, such as Bob Backlund, Rick Steamboat, Ronnie Garvin . . .

A: That's right. Backlund is out of wrestling because he couldn't adapt. He was a one-dimensional scientific wrestler. And Steamboat, what's he doing now? Last I heard he was babysitting. And Ronnie

(Continued on page 60)

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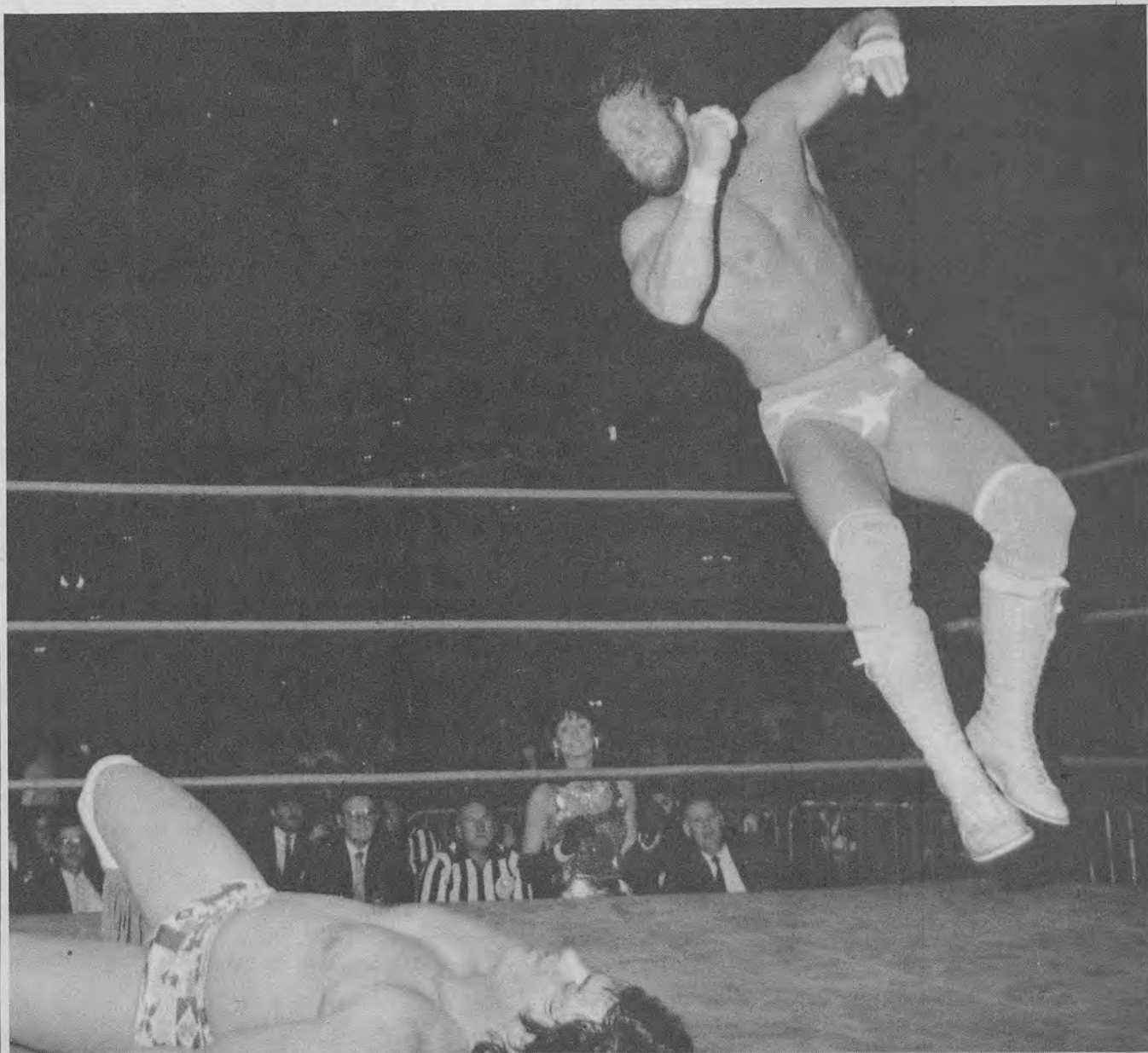
THE WRESTLER PANEL EXAMINES

RAY



**RANDY
SAVAGE**

Each month
THE WRESTLER'S panel of experts
will offer their candid opinions of one
of wrestling's stars. Whether an up-and-coming
youngster or an established superstar in his own right,
our panel will always be frank and honest without fear of reprisal



Randy "Macho Man" Savage (unleashing his flying elbowsmash on Steve Gatorwolf) has long been recognized for his outstanding ability, but there is speculation that his recent alliance with Hulk Hogan could affect the way he wrestles.



CAPT. LOU ALBANO

"Let me tell ya something, daddy, 'Macho Man' Randy Savage has been one of the greatest wrestlers in the World Wrestling Federation for a long time now, and Capt. Lou is telling you that he's finally getting his due. The fans are great, I love them all, but it took them too long to realize what a great wrestler Savage is. He has the aerial maneuvers, he has the strength, and he has Elizabeth, and I think he's gonna regain the Intercontinental title."

Capt. Lou Albano, long known as "The Guiding Light," has guided 13 tag teams to an unmatched 16 WWF World tag team titles.



KILLER KOWALSKI

"I've seen it happen a million times before and it never ceases to amaze me. Here we have a great wrestler, a man with all the tools, a contender to any title in the world. Savage was a maniac, a madman, and he had incredible power, and now he's starting to get soft because of the cheers of the fans. Look at him now, posing with Hogan and doing things just to make the fans happy. The only person he should be trying to make happy is himself. He's a fraud."

Killer Kowalski, one of the most sadistic rulebreakers in the sport's history, runs a wrestling school in Reading, Massachusetts.



PROF. TORU TANAKA

"Randy Savage was very fine wrestler, but he make big mistake by befriendin' Hulk Hogan. This 'Hulkster,' as you call him, is very evil man and will lead Savage down wrong road. 'Macho Man' has tremendous skills. He is scary individual. He come very close to killing Rick Steamboat, but now he make friend with everybody. I believe it is all fault of Elizabeth. Woman belong in home, not in wrestling ring. She is ruining him."

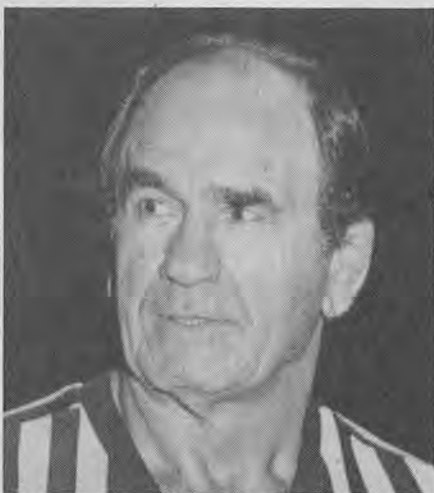
Prof. Tanaka, a three-time co-holder of the WWF World tag team title with Mr. Fuji, is currently a successful actor.



LARRY HENNIG

"What're you doing asking me about Randy Savage when my boy Curt is busy defending the AWA World title against that old Indian McDaniel and that pip-squeak Gagne? Ya wanna know about Savage, I'll tell you about Savage. He used to be a good wrestler, but I think my boy could tear him to pieces. He has no scientific skills, the man is purely a puncher and kicker. He could take some lessons on *real* wrestling moves. Maybe then he'd be something."

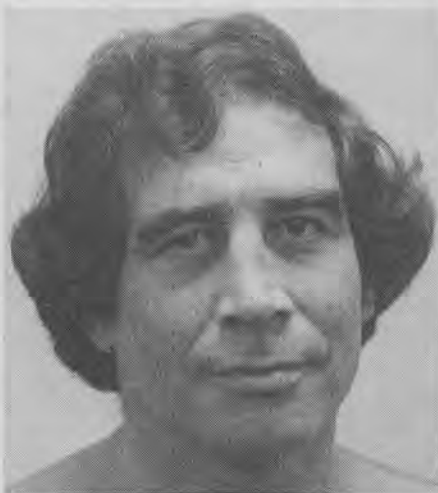
Larry "The Ax" Hennig is a four-time former AWA World tag team champion; he held three of those titles with Harley Race.



LOU THESZ

"I was doing a little research on my own and I noticed that about three years ago, when we first examined Savage, I said that he's cutting his own throat with his rulebreaking. I said that he's capable of beating a man head-on instead of using those sneak-attacks. Well, I think Savage may have finally turned the corner. He still lacks the scientific skills necessary to beat all opponents, but he's cut down on the rulebreaking. It's about time."

Lou Thesz held the NWA World title six times during his fabulous 50-year career. Many consider him the greatest all-round wrestler in history.

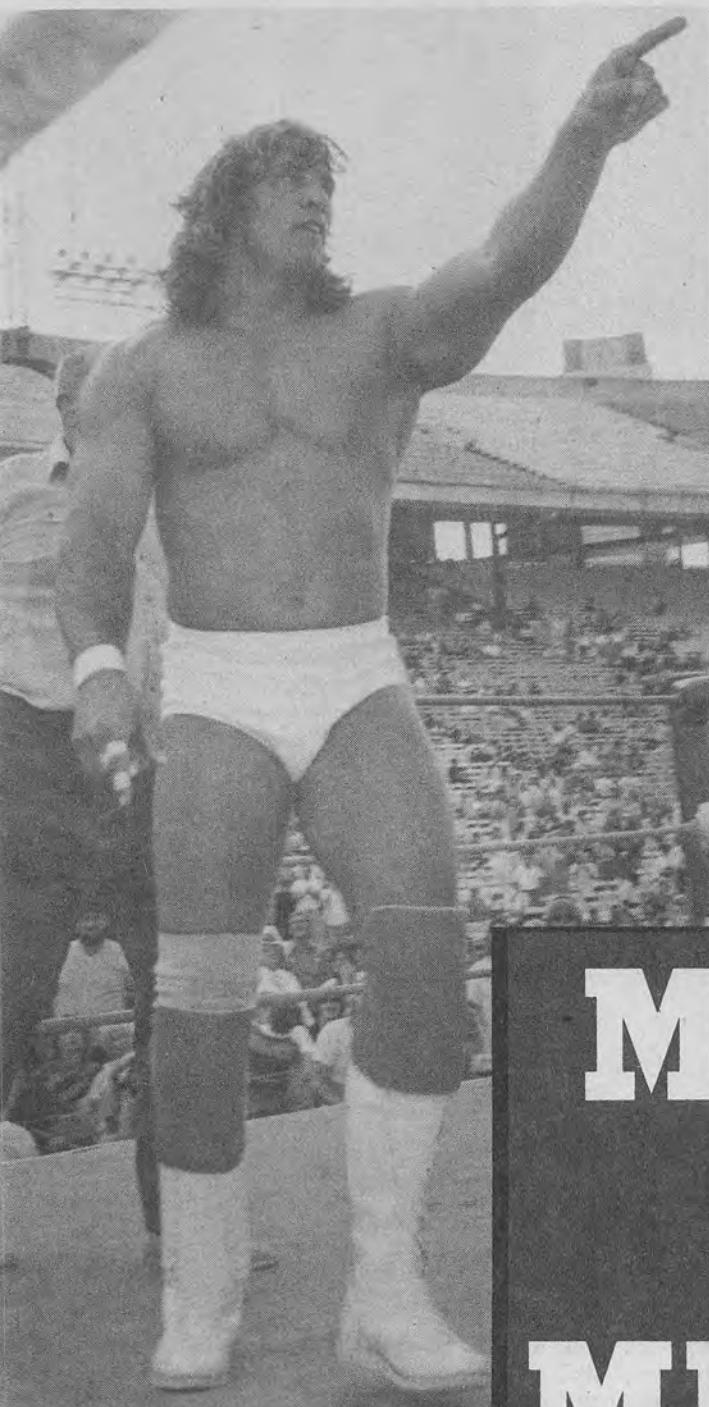


JACK BRISCO

"Randy Savage has undergone one of the most incredible transformations I've ever seen. In fact, when I really think about it, I find it very hard to believe that he's for real. Remember, Savage is a vicious man, he tried to kill Steamboat, and he would've loved to kill George Steele. So how could he have changed so much? You think Elizabeth softened him up? No way. I don't think anything's changed. I just think Savage wants The Honky Tonk Man."

Jack Brisco is a two-time former NWA World champion, and a three-time former NWA World tag team champion with brother Jerry.

KERRY VON ERICH'S COMEBACK:



Kerry Von Erich (left) says he'll be back in the ring for good by Thanksgiving, and his fans couldn't be happier (above). But is "The Modern-Day Warrior" rushing things? Kerry doesn't think so.

MIRACLE OR MISTAKE?

After Kerry Von Erich was injured in a horrible motorcycle accident in June 1986, doctors feared that his career was over. But Kerry battled the odds and the experts and will make his comeback on Thanksgiving in Dallas—a comeback he may live to regret!

EVER SINCE JUNE 4, 1986, the day that he suffered serious injuries in a motorcycle accident near his home town of Denton, Texas, Kerry Von Erich vowed that he would one day return to the ring. He swore that he would overcome the seemingly impossible odds, doctors' predictions, and his own body to make a victorious return.

Kerry tried to fulfill his vow last February, but his return was a one-time affair. A match against Von Erich family archrival Brian Adias turned into disaster as Kerry rebroke a bone in his heel and was forced to the sidelines once again. Months later, Kerry admitted he made a mistake by returning so soon. But, he explained, "I had to do it. I had to get Adias."

So why should this latest comeback be any different? Who can be so sure that when he meets Adias again on Thanksgiving at Dallas' Reunion Arena—Kerry Comeback II—we won't see a repeat of last February's fiasco, when Kerry spent most of the match limping around the ring like a three-legged dog? Do we really know that Kerry is ready for a comeback?

No. We *don't* know.

We do know, however, what Von Erich family doctors said about Kerry's injuries back in June 1986:

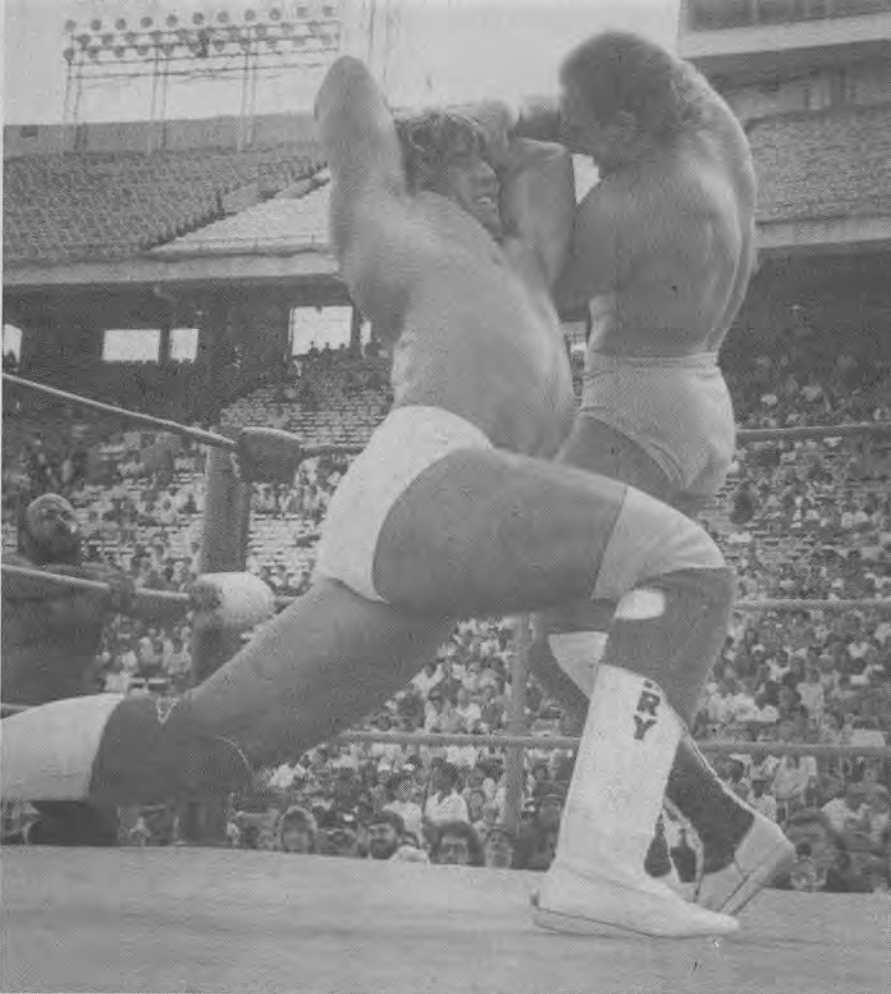
"It is indeed possible that Kerry will walk with a limp for the rest of his life and quite probable that his wrestling skills will be limited."

We also know what Kerry said just a month before his planned Thanksgiving return:

"We're back, full steam ahead. I'm back now better than I was before. When you love wrestling as much as I do, when somebody says you can't do it, you come back and do it."

But there's more tangible evidence that gives reason for concern about Kerry's comeback.

On October 17 at The Cotton Bowl in Dallas, Kerry had a sparring workout with three opponents:



Kerry spars with Frank Lancaster at The Cotton Bowl in Dallas (above). Instead of sparring like he was supposed to, Killer Brooks attacks Kerry, at Brian Adias' request (below). Adias has the most to lose from a Kerry comeback. Despite Kerry's long absence from the ring, their feud has raged on.





Matt Borne, Frankie Lancaster, and Killer Brooks. After two uneventful minutes with both Lancaster and Borne, Kerry had his hands full with Brooks. Under orders from Adias, Brooks tried to pummel Kerry. Von Erich battled back to hold off Brooks and sent Adias flying with a discus punch. Then Kerry was attacked by Adias as he returned to the dressing room. The two men had to be pulled apart by several wrestlers.

This only proved that the Kerry-Adias feud has not simmered down any in the weeks awaiting Kerry's comeback. But the report of *The Wrestler* Dallas correspondent Andrew Ray is worth paying attention to. "Kerry looked fine walking to the ring, but late in the third session and as he was walking back to the dressing room, Kerry was limping noticeably," reported Ray. "If that's how his ankle is going to respond to just five or six minutes in the ring, he might be risking severe injury by returning."

Most of the concern over Kerry centers around his right ankle; the dislocated hip and lacerated right knee he suffered in the accident are virtually back to normal. Days after the accident, doctors operated for over 15 hours to take a portion of muscle from his back and graft it to his right foot. Microscopic surgery was done to reestablish the blood vessels for proper circulation, then skin was taken from the hip and grafted over the wound. Prior to

the micro-surgery, doctors feared that they might have to amputate Kerry's right foot because circulation was cut off.

But that wasn't the end of Kerry's problems with his right ankle. This past summer, 11 doctors were called in to Baylor Medical Center to perform a bone fusion on the ankle. "What they did was fuse two bones in the ankle together," explained Kerry. "We had doctors come in from all over the world for the surgery."

Kerry does not deny limping after the Cotton Bowl workout, but he claims that the ankle wasn't the cause. "It was my knee that bothered me," Kerry said. "A long time ago, I was wrestling Ric Flair a lot and his figure-four leglock messed up my knee real bad. That, combined with all the years I played football and when I threw the discus, beat up my knee real bad. What happened now is the muscles are still weak around that knee

from taking a year-and-a-half off. Once I start getting more active, it shouldn't be any problem. As for my right ankle, it feels no different than the other one."

Whether the ankle holds up under the pressure of nightly competition remains to be seen. Kerry claims that Tony Dorsett, star running back of the Dallas Cowboys football team, also has a fused ankle. "It's pretty common surgery for athletes," says Kerry. Dorsett, however, did not undergo microsurgery and was never in danger of having his right foot amputated. He also didn't sit out nearly a year-and-a-half. And he didn't have an attempted comeback curtailed along the way.

Kerry Von Erich has already overcome the odds by making a remarkable recovery from the accident. Through perseverance and dedication, he has reached the point where an attempted comeback is feasible. Still, the tragic recent history of his family is enough to make anyone nervous whenever a Von Erich attempts something risky. Coming back to such a challenging sport after 18 months on the sidelines is not easy.

It becomes even tougher when one considers that Adias, Al Perez, and others are waiting in the wings, ready to put Kerry back on the disabled list. Soon, we will know whether Kerry's comeback is a miracle or mistake. Right now, we only know the price he might have to pay. □

Before the sparring session, Kerry talks with his father Fritz (top). Kerry is at ringside as Kevin wrestles Al Perez for the World Class title (below). Kevin won the belt back, but was stripped of it because of Kerry's interference.





All Or Nothing **IF JIM CORNETTE CAN'T MANAGE THE NEW BREED— HE'LL DESTROY THEM!**

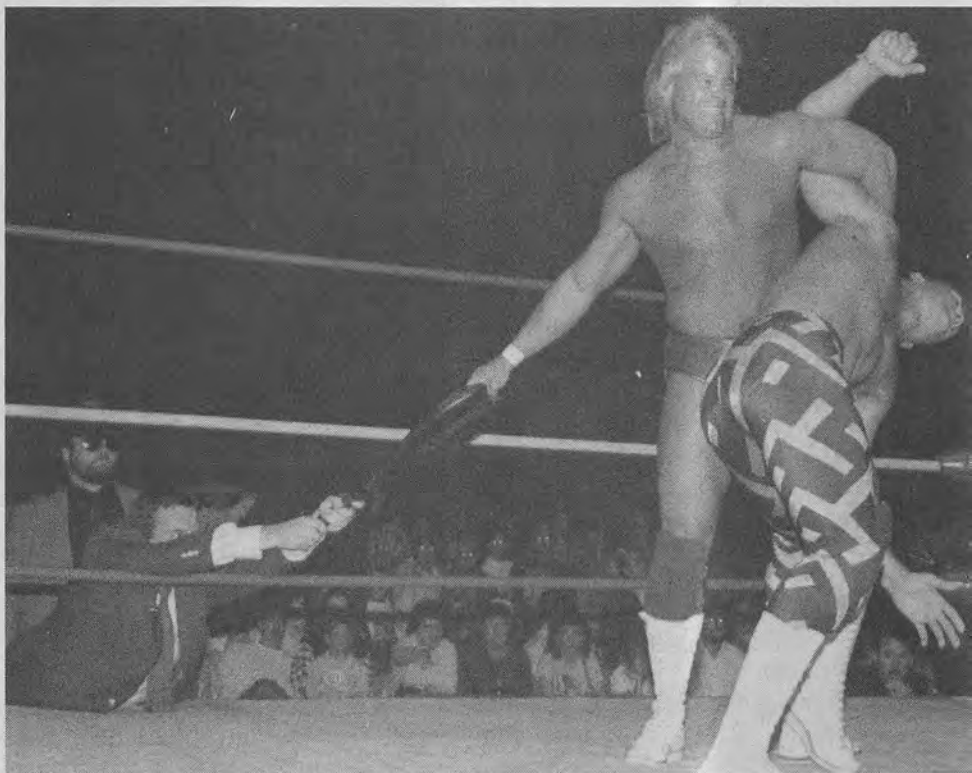
The New Breed are one of the hottest—and most independent—new teams in wrestling. But when Sean Royal snubbed Jim Cornette's managerial offer on national television, Cornette ordered his Midnight Express to eradicate The New Breed—at any cost!

WHAT JIM CORNETTE wants, Jim Cornette usually gets—except in the case of Sean Royal and The New Breed. Royal gained the wrestling world's admiration when he declined Cornette's offer to place himself and fellow New Breeder Chris Champion under the racket-toting manager's exclusive guidance.

But now The New Breed are paying the price for their choice. They find themselves locked in a life-or-death struggle with Stan Lane and Bobby Eaton as the consequence for bruising Cornette's vast ego.

The feud has been violent and vicious, and has raged in arenas from coast to coast. To comprehend the depth of Cornette's hatred for The New Breed, one must understand what he lost when Royal turned him down.

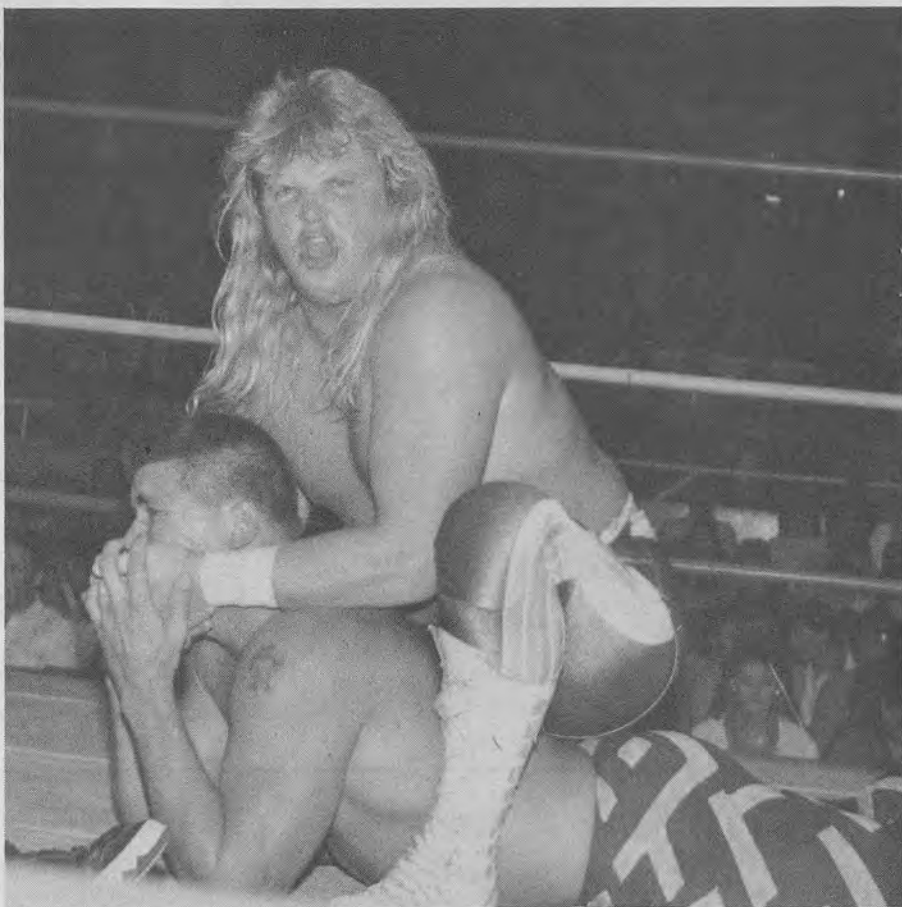
Royal had been wrestling singles matches to keep in fighting trim



Jim Cornette uses his trusty tennis racket to help Stan Lane get extra leverage on the abdominal stretch he has applied on Sean Royal. When The New Breed rejected Cornette's offer to manage them, he resolved to end their young careers.



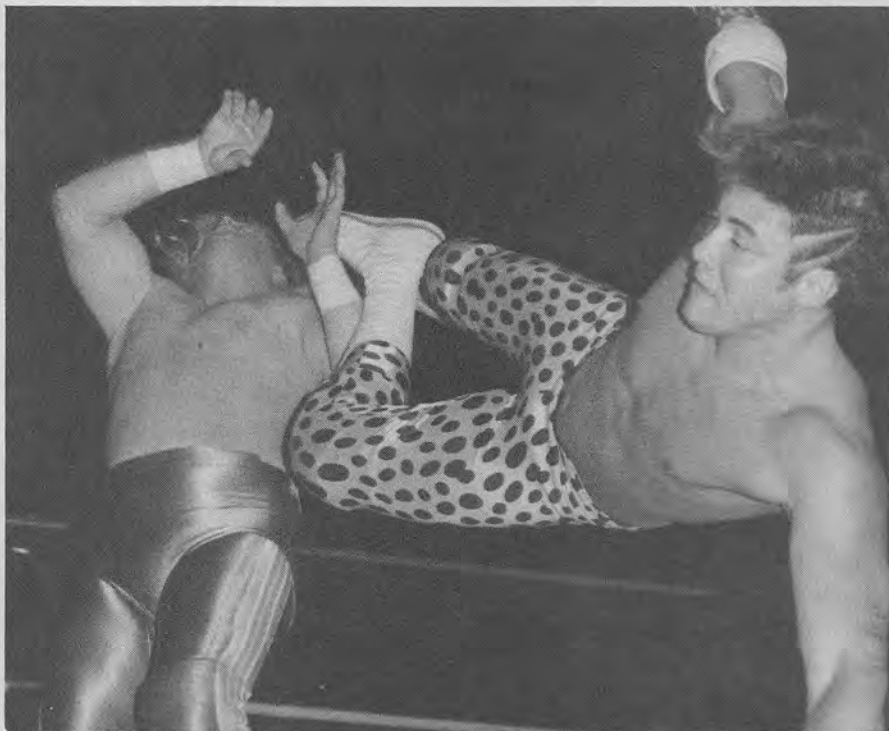
The Midnight Express double-clotheslines Royal (above). Bobby Eaton chinlocks Royal (right). Chris Champion dropkicks Eaton (below). Cornette thought The New Breed would jump at the chance to be managed by him and was shocked when they abruptly turned him down.



until his partner, Chris Champion, could return from injuries suffered in a car crash in May.

At that time, The New Breed had established themselves as a force to be reckoned with in the NWA. Their claim to be from the year 2002 may have confused writers and fans alike, but their claims to represent the future of tag team wrestling *are* taken seriously by everyone. Champion and Royal are both young, in excellent physical shape, and show 21st century-caliber teamwork and scientific knowledge in the ring.

No surprise, then, that Jim Cornette would be interested in managing them. His Midnight Express did manage to capture the U.S. tag team title shortly after Stan Lane replaced Dennis Condrey, but they have failed in their attempts to capture the big prize—the NWA World tag team title. And the Express have been involved in feuds with such formidable and varied opposition as The Road Warriors, The Superpowers, and The Rock 'n' Roll



Express.

The New Breed must have seemed just the ticket for Cornette to cement his hold on tag team wrestling. Signing Champion and Royal would give him a stable that would rival The Four Horsemen in power and versatility. So, at sum-

mer's end, with Champion scheduled to return to the ring in October, the manager stepped up his efforts to close the deal.

But Cornette misplayed his attempt to win over The New Breed by being *too* forceful. Spoiled by past successes, he probably figured

that all he would have to do was flash his checkbook and sign The New Breed into their first match. After all, a similar approach brought Stan Lane and Big Bubba Rogers into Cornette's camp. Even those wrestlers who dislike Cornette and hold him in low esteem as a manager would have to think twice when offered a contract sweetened by Mama Cornette's ample treasury.

The strategy ignored the Breed's—er—*eccentric* view of the world.

"All Cornette wanted to talk about was money, money, and money," said Royal. "What he fails to realize is that by the year 2002, society will have transcended such inefficient economic practices. Expecting Chris and I to go back to such a crude system of material gratification would be like asking present-day society to go back to horses and buggies. Our attitudes toward the sport are based on far more than simple financial gain.

"Additionally, there was no mention of title shots," Royal continued. "Obviously, we would have been expected to play second fiddle to the Midnights. And while we've yet to end their existence on this segment of the space-time continuum, we've proven that we are superior in all forms of wrestling tactics."

Cornette also failed to perceive The New Breed's growing change in attitude. The highly successful double-teaming tactics that characterized their early matches together earned them a rap as rulebreakers, although Royal has always refused to accept what he calls "outdated, irrelevant, and obsolete value judgments from fans and writers who lag behind on the evolutionary scale."

But the sport's observers have always valued The New Breed's explosive and exciting ring style. And when this energy was channeled against the hated Midnights, the fans quickly rallied to their support.

"Well, it was a little gratifying to see the public take such a quantum leap forward in so short a time," Royal said. "Perhaps our returning to the ring has accelerated a heightening of the collective consciousness."

Cornette refused to give his side of his past business dealings with The New Breed, though he did talk at great length about his future intentions toward them:

"The New Breed is a *dying* breed, daddy, make no mistake about it. Those two space cadets forgot one very important fact while they were busy losing their minds: In wrestling, you're either for me or you're against me. If they want to

Royal puts Eaton on his knees (above) and slams him (below). Royal and Champion say they cared nothing about the amount of money Cornette offered them because material things are unimportant in the year 2002.



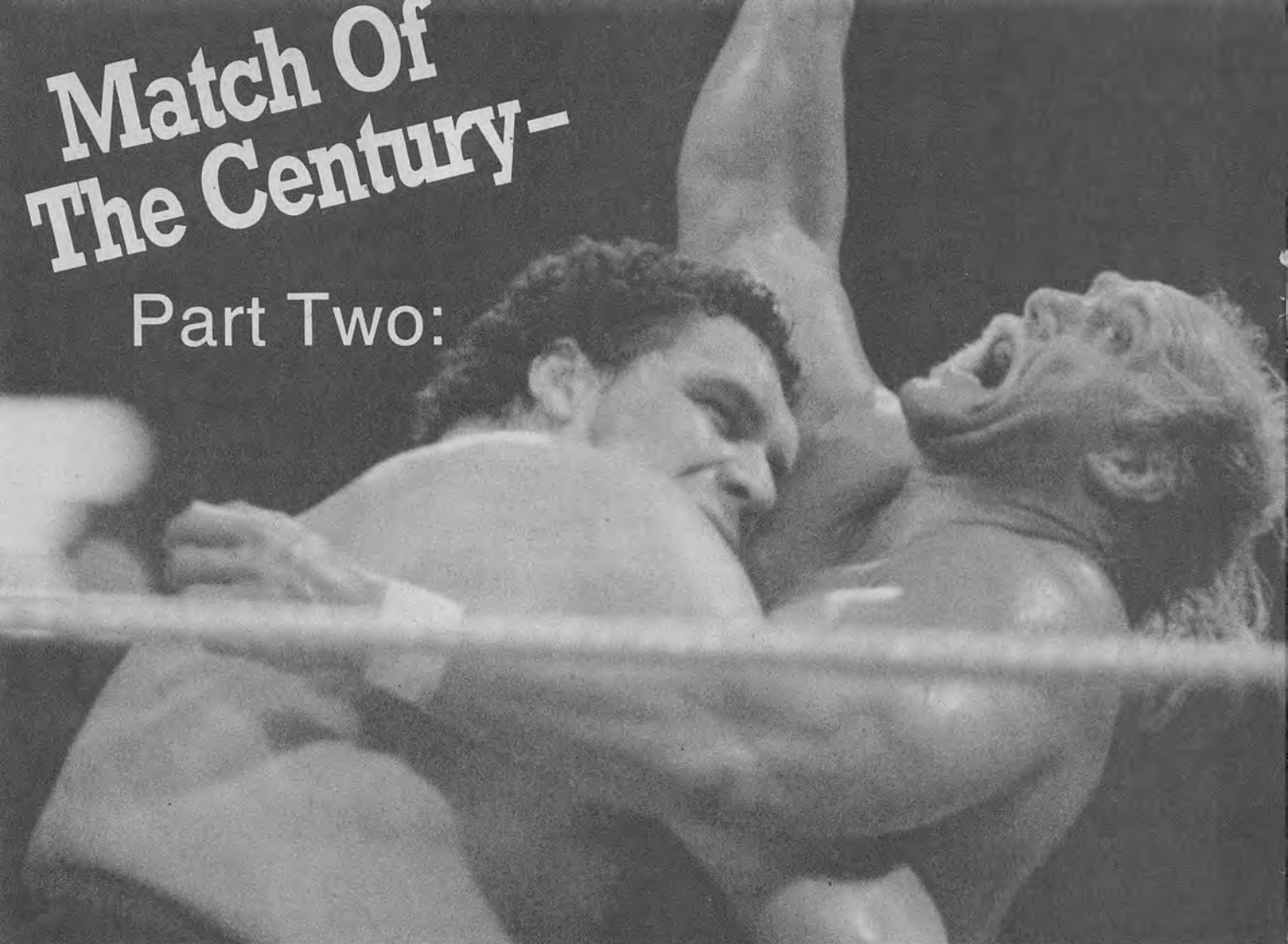
refuse the money, power, glory, and riches that come with working for me, then they're not only stupid, brother, but they're marked men.

"You think I'm joking?" Cornette continued. "Hey, just ask The Rock 'n' Roll Express what happens when you mess with Jim

Cornette and The Midnight Express. I've got the plans, and the Express has the power, to put *anyone* out of this sport. We'll put a hurt on them so bad that their bones won't even *begin* healing until the year 2002! Oh, Mama will be so pleased by that!" □

Match Of The Century—

Part Two:



THE WORLD BRACES FOR AN *ANDRE-HOGAN REMATCH!*

Will there be a rematch? Will Hogan and Andre battle once again for the WWF title? Will it occur during WrestleMania IV? And, this time around, will anyone care?

ANDRE THE GIANT vs. Hulk Hogan. That encounter, the centerpiece of WrestleMania III, is accompanied by a stampede of stirring memories ...

... 93,000 fans on their feet, creating an uproar that, by comparison, made the 1987 World Series in the

Metrodome seem like a library ... Hogan's first attempt to bodyslam the Giant—an attempt that almost cost him his title ... Andre's dogged pursuit of Hogan at the beginning of the match, fueled by a career of frustration ... Hogan's extraordinary ability to rally ... "The Hulkster's"

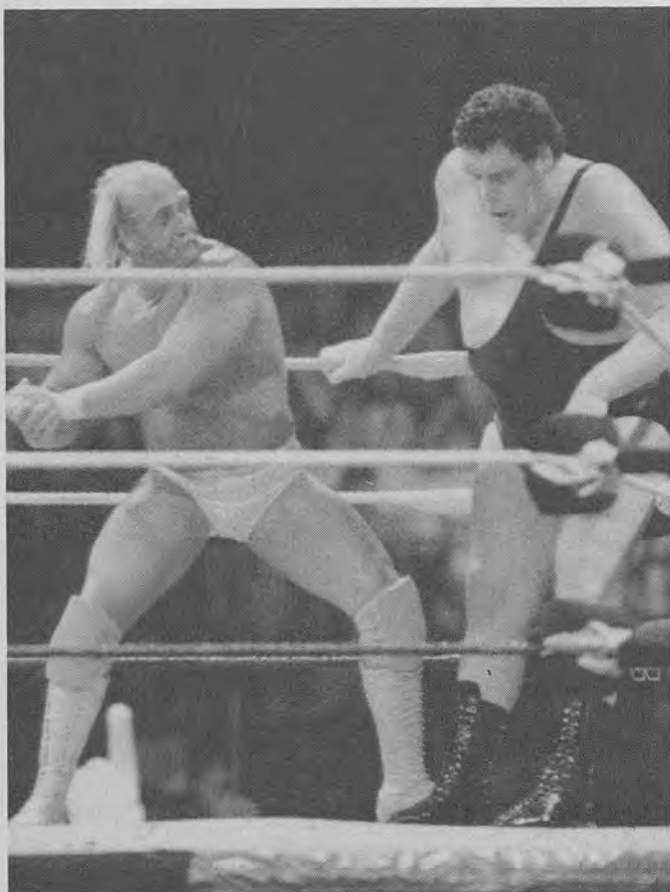
second attempt to bodyslam Andre—successfully—and the pin resulting in Andre's first ever pinfall loss.

The match of the year? Of the decade? Some have called it the match of the century. Now, as Hogan and Andre wrestle on opposite sides in

the WWF's Survivor Series, rumors are flying that a rematch of the two giants is in the making for WrestleMania IV. Such speculation has drawn interest—and a certain amount of controversy. As captivating as the Andre-Hogan matchup was, it drew its share of critics. With a possible rematch scant months away, the criticisms are being heard again.

"Match of the century?" asks one such critic. "Hell, it wasn't even the match of the night! Everyone there

Hulk Hogan warns Andre the Giant to put down his WWF World title belt (right). At WrestleMania III, Hogan chops the Giant (below), who retaliates with a poke in the eye (bottom right). Andre is aching for a rematch, but will Hogan grant him one?



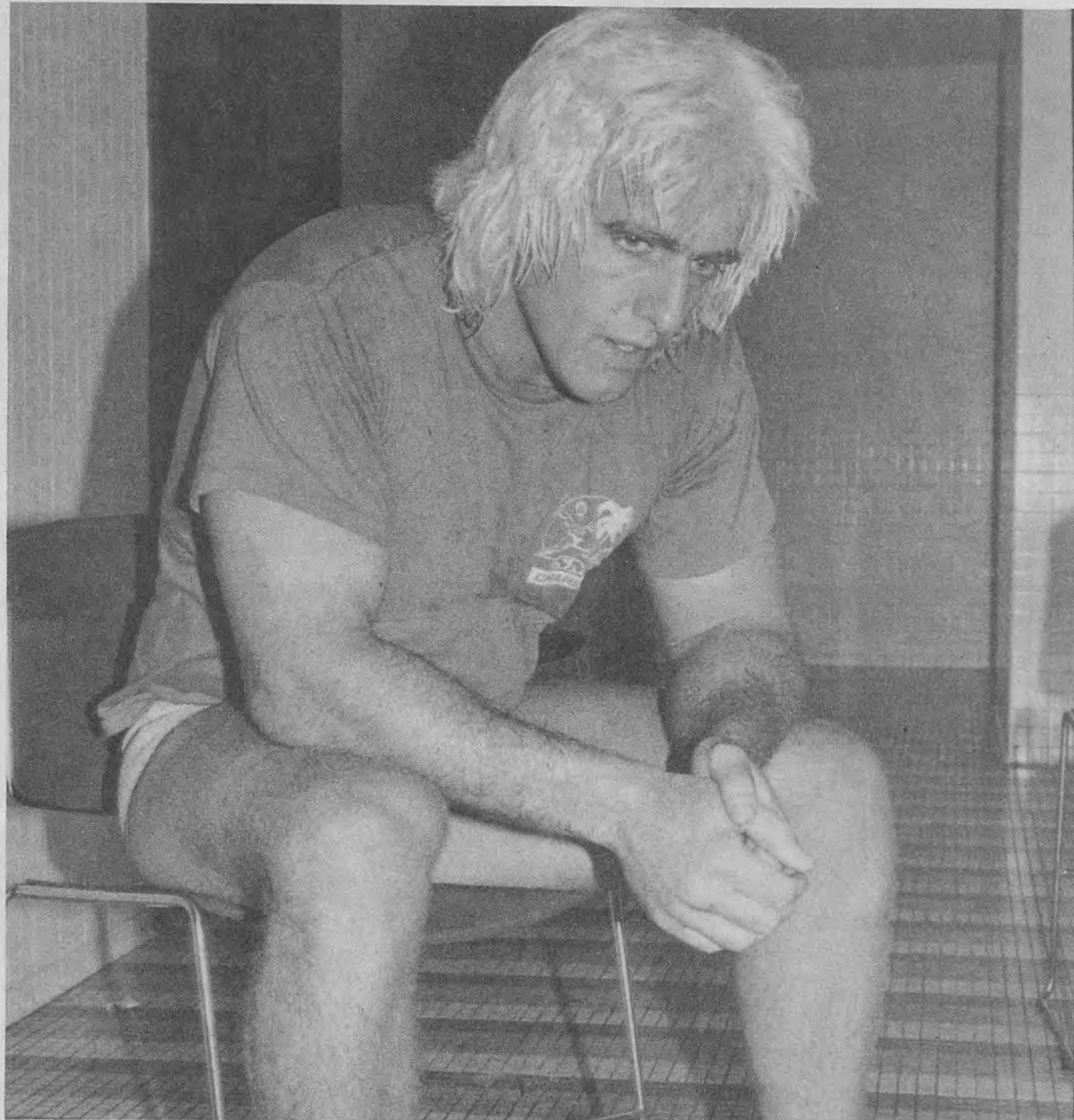
knows Steamboat-Savage blew it away."

This particular critic is exaggerating. Not "everyone" thought the Hulk-Andre confrontation wasn't one of the greatest matches ever. But enough did for the bout to merit closer examination.

The hype was unbeatable—and unbearable. Not since the legendary Don Leo Jonathan-Killer Kowalski wars two decades earlier had a battle between giants so intrigued the public. Hogan, the world's most popular wrestler and, arguably, the sport's greatest champion, squaring off

against Andre the Giant, more myth than man since the moment he stepped into the ring 23 years ago. Andre had never before received a WWF title shot and, in order to obtain a title match, had forsaken his legions of fans and taken up with

(Continued on page 62)



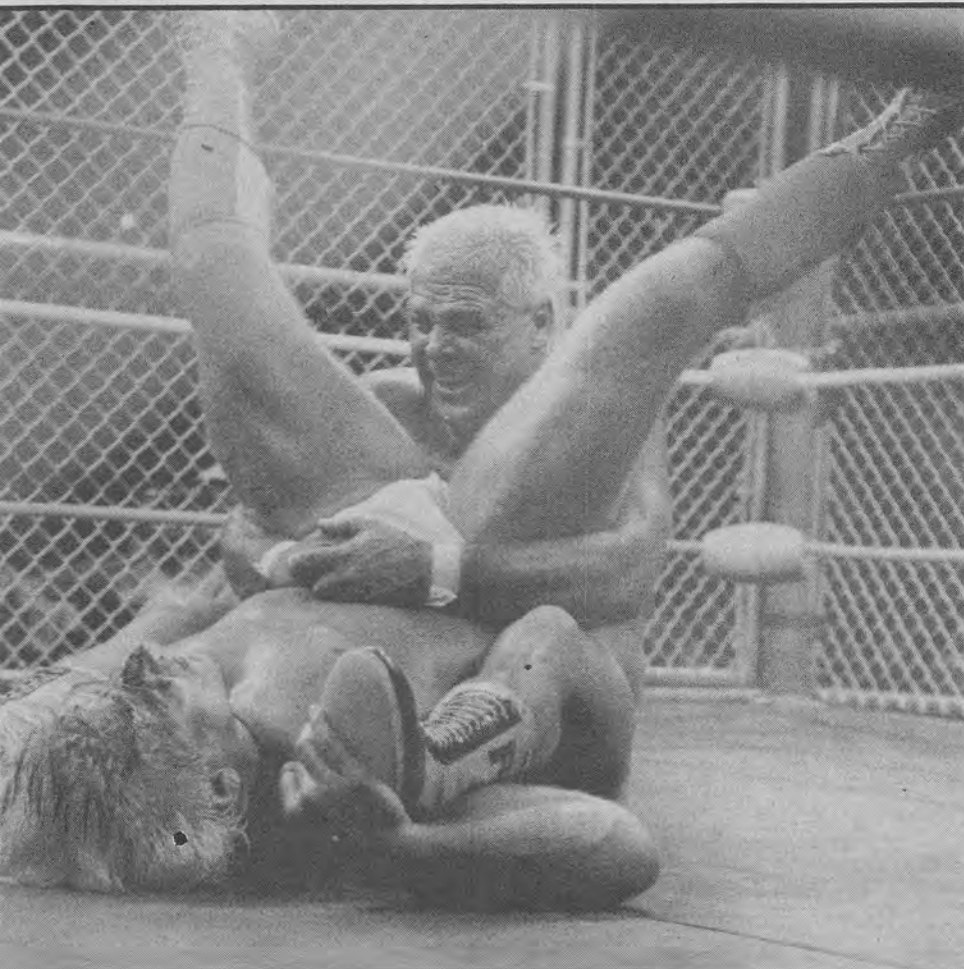
Opposite page: Ronnie Garvin pins Ric Flair with a sunset flip to win the NWA World title. Since he first won the World belt in 1981, Flair has been obsessed with being a champion in every way. The loss to Garvin only toughens his resolve to regain the title.

In the decade of the 1980s, no single wrestler personifies NWA wrestling more than Ric Flair. He has held the World belt on four occasions—and he's determined to make it five, because, as he so candidly admits, he won't survive if he doesn't!

A Personal Exclusive!

RIC FLAIR ADMITS:

“I’M NOTHING WITHOUT THE NWA BELT!”

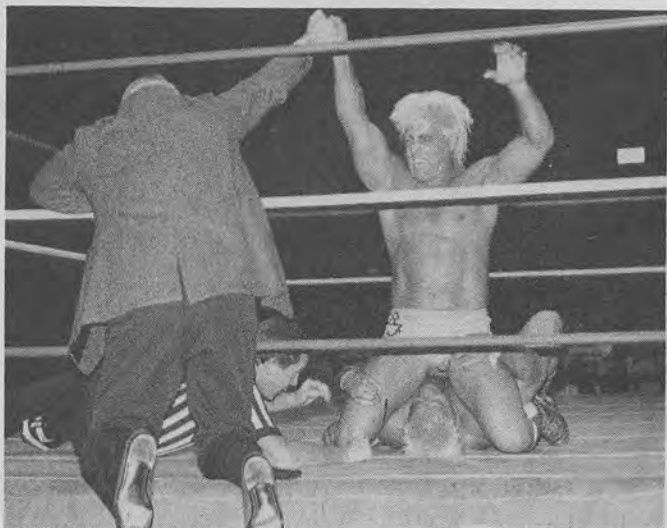


By Gian Trotta

IN HIS OWN mind, Ric Flair has always been, and will always be, the NWA World champion. Even though other wrestlers have at times held the belt, “The Nature Boy” considers himself the only man who can do justice to the title, both inside and outside the ring.

Forget Harley Race, Kerry Von Erich, Dusty Rhodes, and Ronnie Garvin. To Flair, his losses to these men were nothing but slight blemishes on an otherwise glorious record, blemishes that had to be removed much as one would brush away specks of dirt from a clean white suit. That attitude downplays the almost superhuman efforts Flair has made against each opponent to regain the belt.

When the invitation to spend a day with Flair in Charlotte, North Carolina, was extended to the offices of *The Wrestler*, Assistant Editor Gian Trotta threw caution (and other projects) to the wind and asked to go. Flair always makes for good copy, but this was a



J.J. Dillon jumps on the apron and pulls Flair to the ropes before Garvin has a chance to pin him (above). Flair grinds Garvin's bicep into the rope (top right).

rare chance to see the man in a most unusual state—without the NWA World belt.

Would some of his natural bravado be missing, toned down by his September 25 loss to Ronnie Garvin? Or would Flair be his vintage self? The following story shows a man obsessed with regaining something he considers exclusively his own.

THE LIMOUSINE THAT rolled up to the arrivals area at the airport was black, so black that I could see my reflection in the door. After what seemed an eternity, the rear door was thrown open to reveal the unmistakable visage of Ric Flair.

"Quick and slick now, into the car," was his greeting. But it was too late. A fellow traveler, also waiting for a limousine, saw Flair and quickly asked him to autograph his copy of *The Wall Street Journal*.

"Sure," Flair replied as he looked for a clear spot on the paper's masthead. "I'm just sorry I can't give you any stock tips. I got out of the market and into bonds, mutual funds, and real estate two months ago." Suddenly, Flair's entire nature changed. "Sorry," he replied handing back the paper, "But I can't sign it." The door slammed and we were off.

"Why, Ric?" was all I could manage.

"Why you ask? Did you see the



Garvin gives Flair a facerake. The championship is so important to Flair because he's accustomed to living a high lifestyle, which can only be maintained with the kind of money a world champion makes. The "10 pounds of gold" that Flair always refers to is worth 1,000 pounds of gold in his eyes.

date on the paper?"

I said that I did.

"That's just it! It's today's paper. Today. He can show it to someone to prove that I was still functioning, even though I haven't recaptured my belt yet. An ex-champion's signature isn't worth the paper it's printed on!" Flair was starting out on a roll, and I could almost see his eyes flash from behind

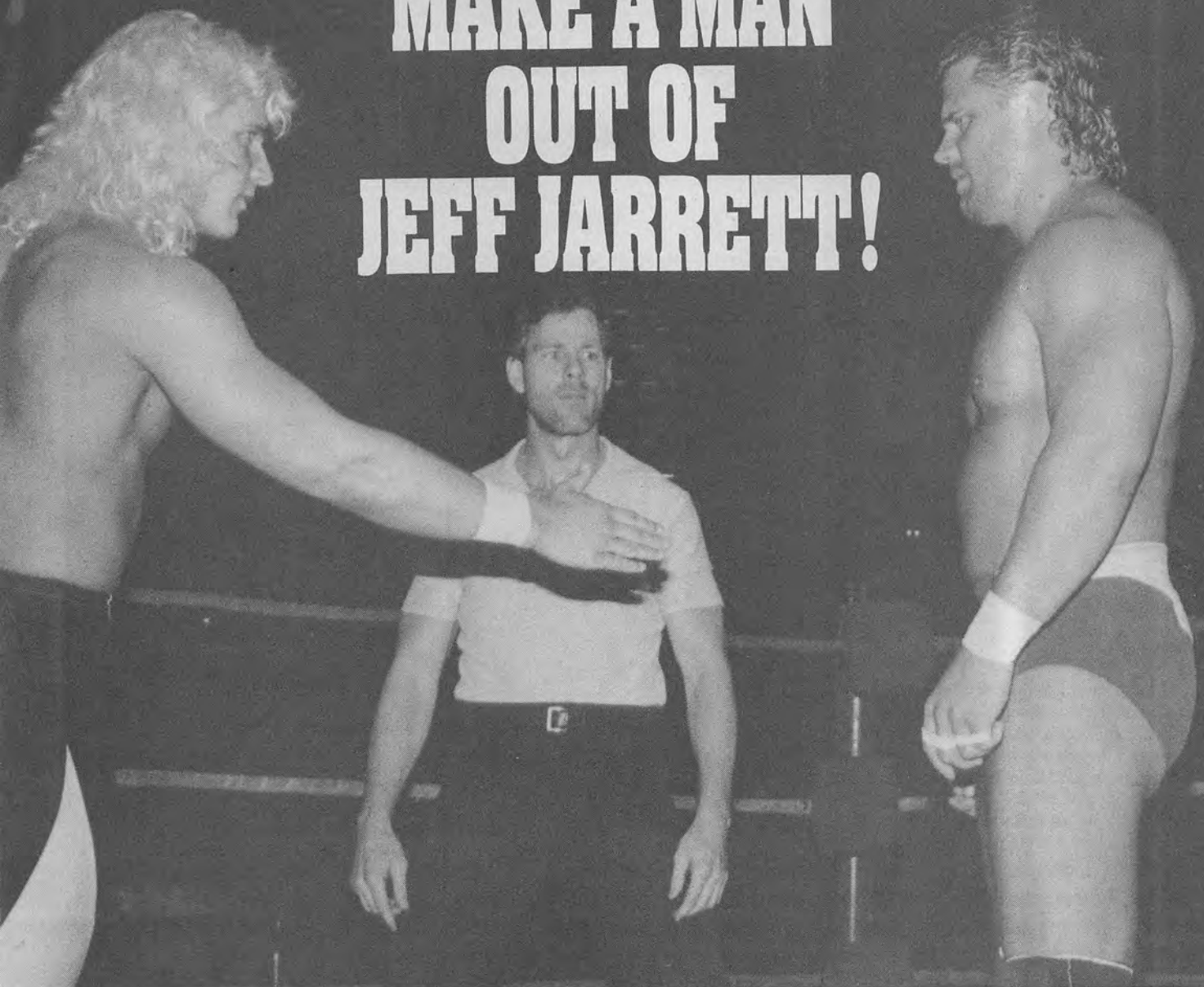
his sunglasses.

"As far as I'm concerned," he continued, "I'm not even *alive* until I get my belt back. Life isn't the same. And it won't be until I'm champ again. Nothing is worth doing until I get that back. Nothing. The belt is my life, and I can't live without it. And I'll do everything I have to to get it back—

(Continued on page 56)

Curt Hennig's Memphis Mission:

MAKE A MAN OUT OF JEFF JARRETT!



YOUNG JEFF JARRETT stood in his corner of the ring waiting for the match to begin. Dressed in skin-tight two-colored spandex pants, matching wrestling boots, and a fancy sequined V-neck jacket, his blond hair flowing

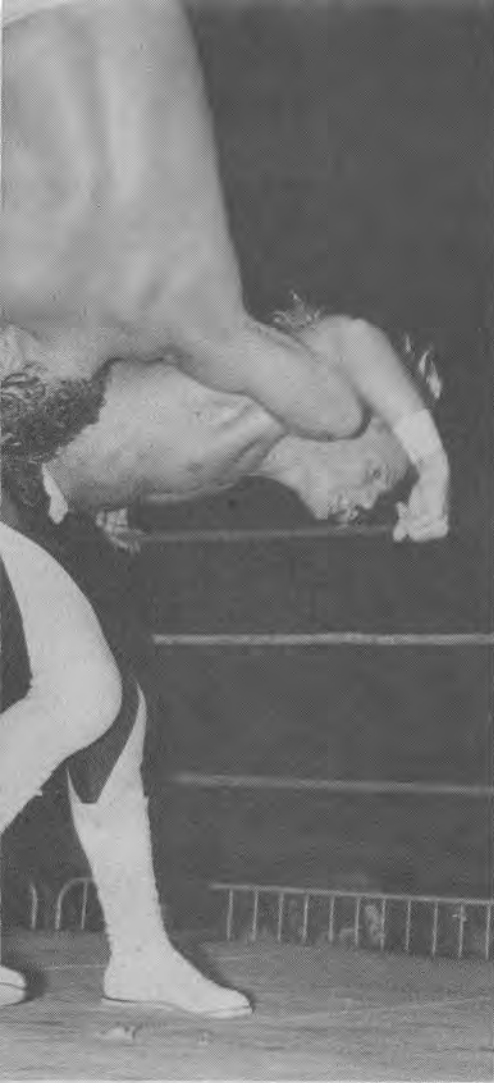
down to his shoulders, Jarrett hardly looked like he was about to contend for the AWA World heavyweight championship.

"When I saw what he was wearing," said World champion Curt Hennig, "I pinched myself, think-

ing I was dreaming. Here's this guy about to wrestle the biggest match of his life and he looks like he just spent the morning in the beauty parlor and the afternoon getting fitted for clothes by Liberace's tailor! I almost couldn't

Mid-America champion Jeff Jarrett is one of the up-and-coming stars of professional wrestling. But his match against AWA World champion Curt Hennig, showed that he still has some learning—and toughening up—ahead before he enjoys full success

Photos by Sam Lowe



Jeff Jarrett, the Mid-America champion, flips AWA World champion Curt Hennig (above), who comes back with a leglock (top) and a chinlock (right). Hennig believes that Jarrett could be a good wrestler someday, but only if he toughens himself up and learns to use the rules to his advantage.

wrestle, I wanted to laugh so hard. Here I am, ready to defend my belt, and there's a man dressed like a woman standing on the other side of the ring.

"And you know what?" added Hennig. "As it turns out, the boy's not a bad wrestler. His style reminds me a little of myself before I turned the corner to greatness. The problem is that Jarrett's just that: a little boy. The promoter's son is nothing more than daddy's little boy. Jerry Jarrett couldn't tough it out, and neither can his son. That's another difference between me and Jarrett: My father was a *real* man."

Hennig was being arrogant as usual, but there was some truth to

what he said. Jeff Jarrett, the Mid-America heavyweight champion, is a fine scientific wrestler and an up-and-coming star, but he's only 200 pounds; compared to the 235-pound Hennig (who is not a giant by any means!), Jarrett *does* look like a little boy. His style of dress might drive the female fans wild, but it does nothing to intimidate a formidable opponent such as Hennig. And not only does Jarrett lack the looks of a killer, he lacks the killer *instinct*.

"Nothing, an absolute zero in the guts department," said Hennig. "He desperately needs somebody to whip him into shape and teach him a lesson. I think I can make a man out of Jarrett, but first he's

gonna have to endure some punishment in the ring. It takes a few battle scars to get that fire in your eyes."

Hennig was admittedly impressed with certain aspects of Jarrett's repertoire during their October 5 match at Memphis' Mid-South Coliseum. Jarrett had Hennig on the run following a series of armdrags and takedowns; he even had the World champion flat on the mat for a pin at one point but couldn't get the three-count.

Experience, guts, and a willingness to stretch the rules in his favor finally turned the match for Hennig. Not afraid to use a chokehold or two, and more than willing to hurt his rival, Hennig fi-

nally scored the pin by illegally grabbing onto Jarrett's trunks when the referee wasn't looking. "Just a little improvising," Hennig cracked afterward.

Jarrett was satisfied with his performance and thought he could have beaten Hennig. "I was just *this* much away from beating him tonight," said Jarrett, holding his thumb and index finger a fraction of an inch apart. "I don't think you're gonna find too many guys who won the title in their first at-



Jarrett goes for the cover (above), the closest he would come to pinning Hennig that night. Hennig flips Jarrett to the mat (bottom left) and gets the pin (below), which he accomplished by grabbing Jarrett's tights.

I never broke the rules and I never resorted to what they call punching and kicking. I had this wimp of a teammate, Greg Gagne, who felt the same way and it got me nowhere. People used to come up to me and say, 'Curt, your father was one of the toughest men in wrestling history. What happened to you?' Meanwhile, there I was getting all these matches against Bockwinkel for the title but never breaking a single rule or really trying to tear apart an opponent.

"Let me tell you this," Hennig continued. "In pro wrestling, your opponent will tear you apart if you give him the chance. This is a brutal sport, not the sweet science you reporters pretend it to be, and you just have to get down in the trenches once in a while and slug it out. The men in this sport are big and strong; these amateur wrestling moves don't always cut it. Fortunately, I had my father and Larry Zbyszko to show me the way.

"The thing is, I'm not sure who's gonna show Jarrett the way," he said. "He has this self-righteous attitude, undoubtedly brought on by his daddy, and I wouldn't be surprised if he's only getting these title shots *because* of his daddy. A guy like Jarrett never wears you down, and you always have to be in just the right position for him to execute his moves. He should bulk up, start lifting some weights, maybe learn how to throw a



tempt—let's face it, it took Hennig months before he could beat Nick Bockwinkel—so I'm not discouraged. I'm gonna keep on trying."

But will he keep on shaking hands with his opponent before a match? Will he continue to rely on his scientific ability without mixing in some of the brawling techniques so necessary for success in professional wrestling? These techniques might work against some of the lesser lights in the Mid-Southern area, but they don't quite cut it against a world champion.

"You know, I was the same way once," admitted Hennig. "I knew all these scientific moves and I could execute them perfectly, but

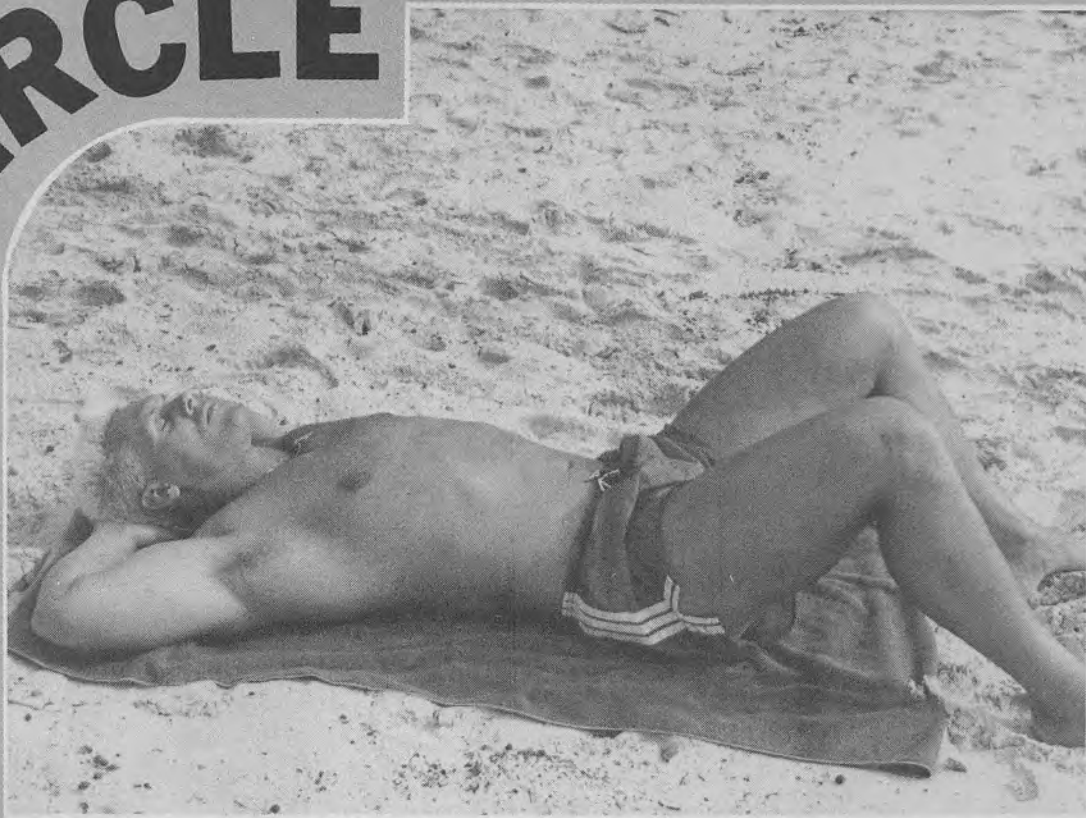


closed-fist punch, and start studying the rulebook so he knows what he can get away with.

"Maybe I taught him a lesson tonight. Can you believe he tried to shake hands with me before the match? I was gonna twist his hand off, but I decided to give him a break. But he's not gonna get too many more breaks. There isn't much room in this sport for a 200-pound amateur wrestler. What I say is the truth because I speak from experience."

Experience that Jeff Jarrett sorely needs. □

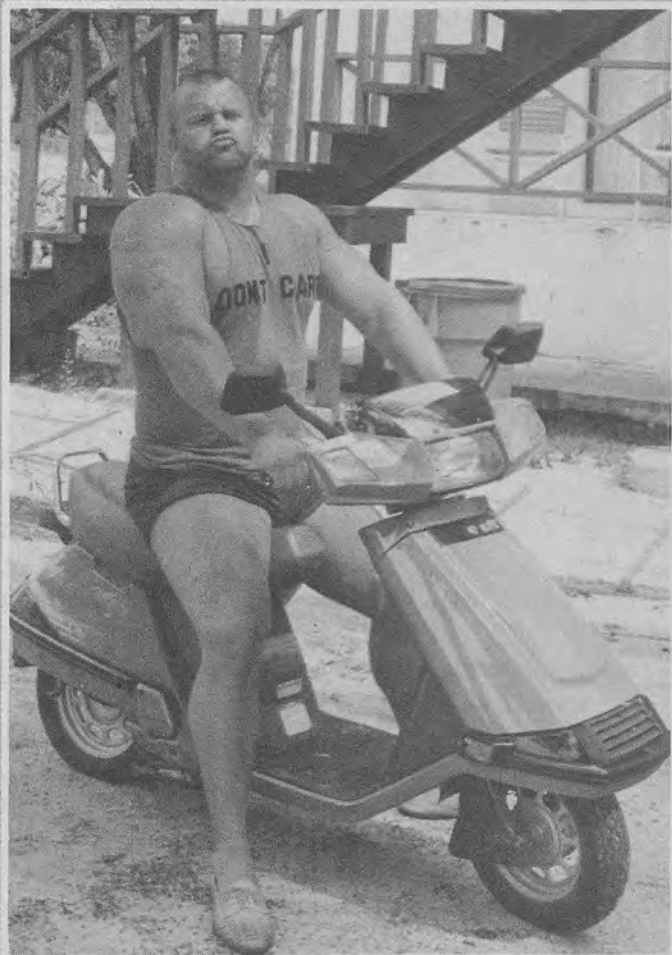
BEYOND THE SQUARED CIRCLE



▲ Sting relaxes on the beach at St. Maarten during a rare vacation. The UWF wrestler was recharging his batteries for the ongoing war with Eddie Gilbert.



▲ Samoan Afa greets his new manager of sorts, singer Laura Branigan. She and Capt. Lou Albano were scheduled to co-manage Afa at a match in Pennsylvania.



▲ Road Warrior Animal takes his motor scooter for a spin, and he doesn't intend to give anyone a ride. His attitude fits the "I don't care" on his shirt.



◀ Andre the Giant films a scene from the movie *The Princess Bride*. Although he's relatively new to acting, Andre received some favorable reviews.



▲ Gordon Solie stopped by the offices of *The Wrestler* to demonstrate his new wrestling trivia game. With him are his business associates, Mike Levraun and Phil Leto.



▲ Capt. Lou Albano films a public service announcement to help in the fight against multiple sclerosis at *Pro Wrestling Illustrated's* TV studios.



▲ Oliver Humperdink says "Hi" to Amanda, daughter of *Wrestler* photographer Duane Long. The "new" Humperdink has time for kids.

◀ Bobby Eaton recently tried to interrupt a photo session with The Rock 'n' Roll Express and nearly started a brawl!

Wrestler^{THE}



Ric Flair

TOP 10

- 1 HULK HOGAN**
302, Venice Beach, CA
WWF World champion
- 2 RONNIE GARVIN**
231, Montreal, Quebec
NWA World champion
- 3 RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
No. 1 contender to NWA World title
- 4 LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL
U.S. heavyweight champion
- 5 STEVE WILLIAMS**
265, Norman, OK
UWF heavyweight champion
- 6 BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
Western States champion
- 7 NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia
NWA TV champion
- 8 RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
No. 1 contender to WWF I-C title
- 9 CURT HENNIG**
235, Minneapolis, MN
AWA World champion
- 10 AL PEREZ**
238, Tampa, FL
World Class heavyweight champion

TAG TEAMS

- 1 THE ROAD WARRIORS**
Combined weight: 567 pounds
No. 1 contenders to NWA tag team title
- 2 TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON**
Combined weight: 484 pounds
NWA World tag team champions
- 3 RICK MARTEL & TITO SANTANA**
Combined weight: 489 pounds
WWF World tag team champions
- 4 BOBBY EATON & STAN LANE**
Combined weight: 453 pounds
U.S. tag team champions
- 5 BRETT HART & JIM NEIDHART**
Combined weight: 515 pounds
No. 1 contenders to WWF tag team title
- 6 THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS**
Combined weight: 453 pounds
No. 2 contenders to NWA tag team title
- 7 THE BRITISH BULLDOGS**
Combined weight: 461 pounds
No. 2 contenders to WWF tag team title
- 8 THE SHEEPHERDERS**
Combined weight: 542 pounds
UWF tag team champions
- 9 THE ISLANDERS**
Combined weight: 472 pounds
No. 3 contenders to WWF tag team title
- 10 JERRY LAWLER & BILL DUNDEE**
Combined weight: 448 pounds
AWA World tag team champions

NWA

World Champion:
RONNIE GARVIN

231, Montreal, Quebec

- 1—LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL
- 2—RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
- 3—NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia
- 4—DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
- 5—BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
- 6—TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX
- 7—STING**
270, parts unknown
- 8—BUBBA ROGERS**
348, Louisville, KY
- 9—MIKE ROTUNDO**
245, Syracuse, NY
- 10—CARLOS COLON**
246, Bayamon, Puerto Rico

AWA

World Champion:
CURT HENNIG

235, Minneapolis, MN

- 1—WAHOO McDANIEL**
260, Midland, TX
- 2—GREG GAGNE**
220, Robbinsdale, MN
- 3—TOMMY RICH**
242, Hendersonville, TN
- 4—JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
- 5—ADRIAN ADONIS**
312, New York, NY
- 6—JEFF JARRETT**
200, Hendersonville, TN
- 7—KEVIN KELLY**
271, Oakland, CA
- 8—D.J. PETERSON**
245, St. Joseph, MO
- 9—LARRY ZBYSZKO**
248, Pittsburgh, PA
- 10—BUDDY LANDELL**
236, Los Angeles, CA

WWF

World Champion:
HULK HOGAN

302, Venice Beach, CA

- 1—THE HONKY TONK MAN**
255, Memphis, TN
- 2—RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
- 3—ONE MAN GANG**
468, Chicago, IL
- 4—TED DIBIASE**
247, Omaha, NB
- 5—BAM BAM BIGELOW**
368, Mt. Laurel, NJ
- 6—KILLER KHAN**
275, Mongolia
- 7—RICK RUDE**
246, Robbinsdale, MN
- 8—PAUL ORNDORFF**
253, Brandon, FL
- 9—HACKSAW DUGGAN**
280, Glens Falls, NY
- 10—KING KONG BUNDY**
446, Atlantic City, NJ

UWF

UWF Champion:
STEVE WILLIAMS

265, Norman, OK

- 1—BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
- 2—TERRY TAYLOR**
225, Vero Beach, FL
- 3—BLACK BART**
261, Pampa, TX
- 4—BIG BUBBA ROGERS**
348, Louisville, KY
- 5—EDDIE GILBERT**
222, Lexington, TN
- 6—STING**
270, parts unknown
- 7—RICK STEINER**
248, Detroit, MI
- 8—SHANE DOUGLAS**
223, Pittsburgh, PA
- 9—GARY YOUNG**
240, Houston, TX
- 10—DORY FUNK JR.**
240, Amarillo, TX

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings.

MOST POPULAR

- 1 RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
Last month: No. 3 Most Popular
- 2 HULK HOGAN**
302, Venice Beach, CA
Last month: No. 1 Most Popular
- 3 DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
Last month: No. 2 Most Popular
- 4 STEVE WILLIAMS**
265, Norman, OK
Last month: No. 4 Most Popular
- 5 RONNIE GARVIN**
231, Montreal, Quebec
Last month: No. 5 Most Popular
- 6 NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia
Last month: No. 6 Most Popular
- 7 BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
Last month: No. 7 Most Popular
- 8 HACKSAW DUGGAN**
280, Glens Falls, NY
Last month: unrated
- 9 KEVIN VON ERICH**
235, Denton, TX
Last month: No. 9 Most Popular
- 10 JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
Last month: No. 10 Most Popular

MOST HATED

- 1 THE HONKY TONK MAN**
255, Memphis, TN
Last month: No. 1 Most Hated
- 2 LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL
Last month: No. 2 Most Hated
- 3 RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
Last month: No. 3 Most Hated
- 4 TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX
Last month: No. 4 Most Hated
- 5 TED DIBIASE**
247, Omaha, NB
Last month: No. 7 Most Hated
- 6 CURT HENNIG**
235, Minneapolis, MN
Last month: No. 6 Most Hated
- 7 ANDRE THE GIANT**
497, Grenoble, France
Last month: unrated
- 8 LARRY ZBYSZKO**
248, Pittsburgh, PA
Last month: No. 5 Most Hated
- 9 KING KONG BUNDY**
446, Atlantic City, NJ
Last month: unrated
- 10 TERRY TAYLOR**
225, Vero Beach, FL
Last month: No. 10 Most Hated

For period ended October 28, 1987

WORLD CHAMP.

U.S. Champion:
LEX LUGER

268, Chicago, IL

- 1—DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
- 2—NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia
- 3—RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
- 4—TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX
- 5—BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
- 6—STING**
270, parts unknown
- 7—JIM GARVIN**
235, Tampa, FL
- 8—ARN ANDERSON**
249, Minneapolis, MN
- 9—KEVIN SULLIVAN**
252, Boston, MA
- 10—MIGHTY WILBUR**
440, Hayward, CA

WORLD CLASS

World Class Champion:
AL PEREZ

238, Tampa, FL

- 1—KEVIN VON ERICH**
235, Denton, TX
- 2—TED ARCIDI**
300, Boston, MA
- 3—BRIAN ADIAS**
238, Denton, TX
- 4—TONY ATLAS**
247, Roanoke, VA
- 5—ERIC EMBRY**
225, Lexington, KY
- 6—MATT BORNE**
235, Portland, OR
- 7—THE IRON SHEIK**
262, Teheran, Iran
- 8—SHAUN SIMPSON**
200, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 9—AL MADRIL**
231, Los Angeles, CA
- 10—SKIP YOUNG**
230, Denton, TX

STAMPEDE

North American Champion:
OWEN HART

223, Calgary, Alberta

- 1—JASON THE TERRIBLE**
265, parts unknown
- 2—CPL. KIRCHNER**
240, Ft. Bragg, NC
- 3—MAKIAN SINGH**
380, Saginaw, MI
- 4—BRIAN PILLMAN**
225, Cincinnati, OH
- 5—STEVE DISALVO**
298, Boston, MA
- 6—ZODIAC**
225, parts unknown
- 7—PHIL LAFLEUR**
245, Montreal, Quebec
- 8—BIFF WELLINGTON**
225, Calgary, Alberta
- 9—BRUCE HART**
211, Calgary, Alberta
- 10—JERRY MORROW**
235, Martiniqne

MID-SOUTHERN

AWA Southern Champion:
BOBBY JAGGERS

275, Dunlap, KS

- 1—JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
- 2—BILL DUNDEE**
214, Melbourne, Australia
- 3—JEFF JARRETT**
200, Hendersonville, TN
- 4—SUPERSTAR BUBBA**
407, San Antonio, TX
- 5—STEVE KEIRN**
238, Tampa, FL
- 6—CARL FERGIE**
230, Memphis, TN
- 7—BILLY TRAVIS**
218, Houston, TX
- 8—HECTOR GUERRERO**
218, Mexico City, Mexico
- 9—DR. D**
229, parts unknown
- 10—ROCKY JOHNSON**
230, Halifax, Nova Scotia

CONTINENTAL

Continental Champion:
TITLE VACANT

(last held by Wendell Cooley)

- 1—WENDELL COOLEY**
220, Milton, FL
- 2—DUTCH MANTEL**
224, Oil Trough, TX
- 3—DOUG FURNAS**
265, Commerce, OK
- 4—TOM PRITCHARD**
220, Houston, TX
- 5—THE BULLET**
234, parts unknown
- 6—TONY ANTHONY**
235, Bucksnorth, TN
- 7—STEVE ARMSTRONG**
235, Marietta, GA
- 8—ROBERT FULLER**
238, Dyresburg, TN
- 9—JONATHAN BOYD**
240, New Zealand
- 10—JIMMY GOLDEN**
235, Montgomery, AL

WILD WEST

- 1—THE MISSING LINK**
273, parts unknown
- 2—ICEMAN PARSONS**
245, St. Louis, MO
- 3—BUDDY ROBERTS**
247, Del City, OK
- 4—THE FABULOUS LANCE**
260, Arlington, TX
- 5—JACK VICTORY**
230, Atlantic City, NJ
- 6—JOHN TATUM**
236, Hollywood, CA
- 7—BILL IRWIN**
250, Duluth, MN
- 8—SOLOMON GRUNDY**
450, Louisville, KY
- 9—JEFF RAITZ**
235, Dallas, TX
- 10—BOB BRADLEY**
240, Boston, MA

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating more than 150 wrestlers in 14 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

Goodbye, Florida—hello, Stampede! There's a major change on our ratings pages this month. By now, you may have noticed that the Florida ratings are gone and have been replaced by a top 10 for Stampede Wrestling. This change came about for a very good reason: After nearly 40 years in the business, Championship Wrestling from Florida no longer exists.



Dory Funk Jr.

CWF was associated with the National Wrestling Alliance, and its various champions often received shots at the NWA World heavyweight and tag team champions. Little more than 10 years ago, **Dusty Rhodes** was one of the hottest wrestlers in the country, and CWF rode along on his wave of popularity. CWF was the home of legendary announcer **Gordon Solie** and has also been home to such stars as **Eddie Graham**, **Buddy Colt**, **Bobby Shane**, **Bugsy McGraw**, **Terry Funk**, **Dory Funk Jr.**, **Jack** and **Jerry Brisco**, **Barry Windham**, **Kevin Sullivan**, and **Lex Luger**.

Despite its association with the NWA, CWF operated its own shows in Florida. The NWA World champion would occasionally wrestle the Florida or Southern titlist on cards in Tampa, Daytona Beach, Lakeland, Orlando, and other CWF strongholds, but the shows were generally filled with talent exclusive to the Florida area. In the past year, however, Jim Crockett Promotions took over CWF and began sending more World Championship Wrestling talent down to Florida. Eventually, the difference between WCW and CWF became minute; finally, CWF offices were shut down.

Crockett Promotions will continue to run shows in Florida. **Mike Rotundo** is still the Florida champion; **Steve Keirn** and **Mike Graham**, who recently won the belts from **The Mighty Yankees**, are still the Florida tag team champions. These belts will now be challenged for by all NWA wrestlers.

The decision to boost Stampede Wrestling into a permanent ratings spot was rather easy. Operating out of Calgary in the Canadian province of Alberta, Stampede is one of the fastest growing promotions in the sport. Stampede North American Champion **Owen Hart** is just one several promising young wrestlers competing in the Stampede area. And the editors of *The Wrestler* felt it was time for Canadian representation in our ratings.

"A lot of fans in the United States don't realize how popular wrestling is in Canada," said Senior Editor **Bill Apter**, "but it's probably as popular there as it is here. Remember, they drew 72,000 fans for that show in Toronto last year, and the gates are consistently high in Montreal,

Toronto, and western Canada. The WWF has a pretty solid hold on eastern Canada, but Stampede is really big in the Canadian Rockies. Some of the greatest stars in wrestling, such as **The British Bulldogs** and **Brett Hart** got their start in Stampede. **Wayne Farris**, now known as **The Honky Tonk Man**, was wrestling there before he came to the WWF."

There are two other belts recognized by Stampede: the British Commonwealth championship, currently held by **Gama Singh**, and the International tag team title, which is presently vacant (but was most recently held by **Bruce Hart** and **Brian Pillman**). The British Commonwealth championship will receive an automatic number one rating behind the Stampede North American champion. With its emergence in our ratings, you can expect to see a lot more coverage of Stampede in the pages of *The Wrestler* and its sister publications in the months to come.

It's the wild Wild West! This month, one of the newer federations in the United States takes center stage in our revolving ratings category. The Wild West Wrestling Federation, which operates out Dallas-Ft. Worth, Texas, and holds most of its shows at Billy Bob's in Ft. Worth, makes its first appearance in our ratings.



Iceman Parsons

But many of the wrestlers working in Wild West should be familiar to you already. There's no Wild West title (a tournament to crown a Wild West champion is being planned for early 1988), but the top wrestler in the federation, **The Missing Link**, was once in **Dark Journey's** stable in the UWF. In fact, most of the wrestlers in our Wild West ratings have competed in the UWF, including **Iceman Parsons** (who left the UWF shortly after his feud with **Chris Adams**), **Jack Victory**, **John Tatum**, **Wild Bill Irwin**, **Jeff Raitz**, and **Buddy Roberts**. **The Fabulous Lance** wrestled in the World Class area under the name **Lance Von Erich**.

Certainly, the Wild West has more than its share of exciting wrestlers, and this new kid in town is sure to make an impact on the Texas wrestling scene.

We're ready for the flood! Because there's no doubt that it's coming. We know that fans of areas not getting monthly representation in our ratings are going to ask why Stampede got the nod and not their federation. Our decision will remain firm, but we do want to hear your thoughts on the ratings change. After all, that's what "Ratings Analysis" is all about. Send your comments to: "Ratings Analysis," c/o *The Wrestler*, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571. □



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YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 6)

RUNNING INTERFERENCE?

Let's ask Barry Windham the questions: "What are you going to do next now that you've interfered in the NWA TV match between Tully Blanchard and The Man Without a Country, Nikita Koloff? Are you going to help The American Disgrace, Dusty Rhodes, win Lex Luger's U.S. title with your outside interference?"

Well, Windham, if you were smart (which you aren't), you would vacate the Western States championship to Tully in return for your uncalled-for involvement in the business of The Four Horsemen. Knowing how stubborn you are, you won't heed the advice, so be prepared for more pain from Ric, Lex, Tully, and Arn. And Nikita, enjoy the TV title for the short time you have it, you sorry commie!

NATE DAMPIER
Casa Grande, AZ

RECALLING A RARE BREED

To the wrestling fans who love tough, rugged wrestlers, I hate to say this: We've lost another one.

Scott "Hog" Irwin, one of the fam-



The late Scott Irwin performs a legdrop on Ron Ritchie. Heather Miller will miss Irwin's rugged style.

ous Irwin brothers, is gone. After a year and a half of fighting a brain tumor, he's gone forever. I know I'm speaking for his brother "Wild" Bill and the fans when I say that we'll all miss him. Although some of the fans didn't like his style, we shall remember him forever.

HEATHER MILLER
Camp Hill, PA

THUMBS UP FOR DILLON ...

Your "Thumbs Down" comment on J.J. Dillon in the December 1987 issue was foolish, ignorant, and unbecoming of "the most respected magazine for two generations." Your accusations were both unsupported and untrue.

Your accusation that Dillon has "made a mockery of this great sport" and has "done [his] best to destroy the integrity of the NWA World title, TV title, and U.S. belt," was totally unproven. How has he done this? So what if he interferes to help his men keep their titles? Barry Windham does this all the time, but I don't see him with a "thumbs down." Anyway, it's Dillon's job as a manager to do this for his men.

"You're afraid to get in the ring," you wrote. Am I to suppose that his involvement in "War Games/The Match Beyond" was an act of cowardice? Or am I to pretend that it never happened at all?

"You feign injury!" Are you trying to tell me that he wasn't double-teamed, beaten, and suffered a shoulder injury in that match?

"You claim to be a genius, but you're nothing but an ignorant fool." Dillon may be egotistical, but give credit where credit is due. Not only is he responsible for Tully Blanchard Enterprises, he also handles the contracts and other arrangements for The Four Horseman. This includes keeping them strong and together. His ability to get Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson to bounce back and capture the NWA World tag team title less than a month after Ric Flair's World title loss and Blanchard's TV

(Continued on page 50)

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YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 49)

title loss shows his managerial genius.

"Bury your head in shame!" I think the writers of *The Wrestler* should take their own advice. I believe you owe J.J. Dillon and the fans an apology for your undeserved abuse.

ERIK SANDER
Severna Park, MD

... BUT DOWN FOR MISSY

I read the November 1987 issue of *The Wrestler* in which there were two comments from Mike Jenkinson ("Anything And Everything") and Steve Sadler ("Thumbs Up, Missy") in "Your Letters" about Missy Hyatt's departure from the WWF.

First of all, you made the right decision to give Missy a "thumbs down," because she blew an opportunity to be seen nationally. But the real truth is that she didn't want to be around *real* superstars like Hulk Hogan, Rick Martel, Tito Santana, and Hacksaw Duggan. The WWF gave her a chance to mend her ways, but she took the easy way out. The worst part is that idiots like Sadler and Jenkinson believe her.

I'd like to add that Jesse Ventura is the most biased announcer in wrestling. You may like him, but some of his remarks are racist. For example, he always refers to Koko B. Ware as "Buckwheat." You may find it funny, but it isn't—and you should know that.

HOWARD McDONALD
Yonkers, NY

THE HERCULEAN TASK

In answer to your question "Can Hercules Hernandez Shield Bobby Heenan From Ken Patera?" (November 1987), the answer is: YES!

I guess Hercules will have to prove to all the fans that, like Billy Jack Haynes, Patera will fall to his superior power and muscles.

Hercules is the one bright light in the WWF. He is absolutely awesome. He has taken and captured the fe-



Hercules Hernandez applies his devastating full-nelson on Ken Patera, just what Nancy Smothers and no doubt hundreds of Hercules' fans wanted to see.

male fans that Haynes used to have. Now he will wipe out Patera's base of fan support.

How about a shot somewhere in your magazine of Hercules applying that devastating full-nelson?

NANCY SMOTHERS
Somerset, KY □

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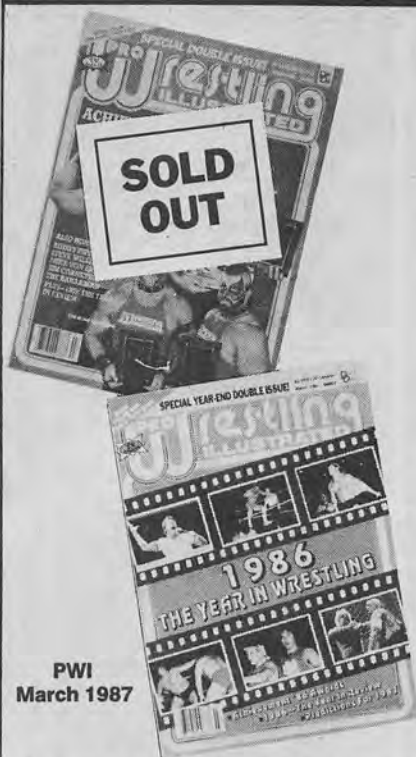
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PWI
March 1987

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YOU ASKED US

(Continued from page 12)



Stampede North American champion Owen Hart armbars The Cuban Assassin. While Hart says that he would someday like to team with his brother Brett, he adds that he first must take care of some unfinished business in Calgary.

ever reflect itself back upon us, no matter how far we may try to dodge that image."

Q: "My question is for Owen Hart: Will you come to the WWF and team with your brother Brett? And if you do, will you adopt the same kind of tactics?"—Mike Feingold, Seattle WA

A: "Whoa!" said Owen when posed the question. "That's asking a man to really go out on a limb. Although I don't agree with all of Brett's tactics, I do look forward to teaming with him someday. I mean, nobody makes a better partner than your own brother, especially if he's as talented a wrestler as Brett. But let's remember, Brett already has a good partner in Jim Neidhart, and they're busy defending their WWF World tag team title. Plus, I've got some unfinished business up here in Calgary to tend to."

Q: "My question is for Paul E. Dangerously: Now that Jerry Lawler and Bill Dundee have won the

AWA World tag team belts, do you foresee an eventual showdown between them and your 'Original' Midnight Express?"—Ken Baiko, Canton, OH

A: Upon being reached on his ever-present portable cellular phone, Dangerously was more than happy to discuss this issue, especially after he had reversed the charges to our office: "Ah, the question shows that someone out there can read the writing on the wall, and it spells destruction for Lawler and Dundee in red letters five feet high. In fact, their winning the belts, which I'm sure was done dishonestly, was the best news I've had since I sold all my stock the day before the October crash. Lawler and Dundee must now venture forth from that sinkhole known as Memphis in order to defend the title. In fact, they must perforce enter into 'The Danger Zone' where myself, Dennis [Condrey] and Randy [Rose] will be waiting to beat, punish, pummel, chastise, embarrass, and humiliate them. As an afterthought, we'll also take the belts." □

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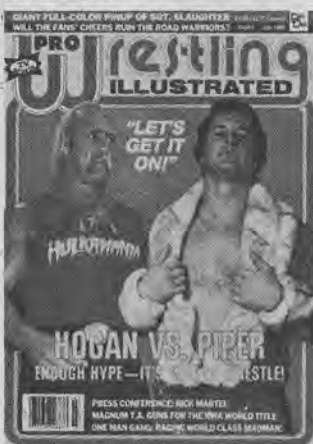
November 1984/COLOR PINUP: Rick Martel. **Sgt. Slaughter**, Von Erich, Road Warriors, Windham, Rotundo.

January 1985/COLOR PINUP: Tito Santana. **Road Warriors**, Billy Jack, Hayes, 1984 fan ballot.

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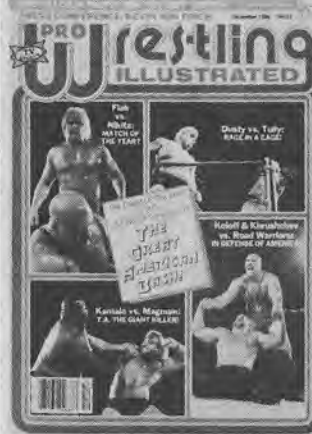
JULY 1985

July 1985/COLOR PINUP: Sgt. Slaughter. **Hogan vs. Piper**, Warriors, One Man Gang, T.A., Martel.

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October 1985/COLOR PINUP: Chris Adams. **Rick Steamboat**, Warriors, Nikita, WWF scouting reports.

November 1985/COLOR PINUP: Randy Savage. **Ric Flair**, Slaughter, Steamboat, World Class scouting reports.



DECEMBER 1985

December 1985/COLOR PINUP: Jesse Ventura. **Great American Bash**, Von Erich, Orndorff, Williams & DiBiase.

January 1986/COLOR PINUP: Hacksaw Duggan. **Hulk Hogan**, T.A., Brody.

February 1986/COLOR PINUP: Nikita Koloff. **Mike Von Erich**, Warriors, Santana, Taylor, Barbarian, Race.

April 1986/COLOR PINUP: Ric Flair. **Wendi Richter**, Adams & Hernandez, Dusty & Warriors vs. Flair & Andersons.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

(Continued from page 8)

Force in a number of thrilling matches, appear to be in a good title position now.

On the same card, **Ted DiBiase** was scheduled to wrestle **Brutus Beefcake**, but could not because of an injured right knee. Instead, DiBiase stood at ringside with a cane while his bodyguard, **Virgil**, wrestled Beefcake. The extent of DiBiase's injury is unknown, but it could hurt him in his upcoming title matches against World champion **Hulk Hogan**.

Larry Zbyszko, the sadistic madman who has haunted both the WWF and the AWA during his infamous career, was getting ready to move on to the UWF as of press time. Zbyszko is hoping for a shot at UWF heavyweight champion **Steve "Dr. Death" Williams**. "Yeah, I've heard about Zbyszko," said Doc after a training session for his Starrcade battle against Western States champion **Barry Windham**. "I've heard about how he turned on **Bruno Sammartino** and how he almost killed **Nick Bockwinkel**, but let's see what he can do against me. Would I grant him a title shot? Damned right I would! 'Dr. Death' doesn't back down from anyone!"

Marty Jannetty and **Shawn Michaels**, **The Midnight Rockers**, defeated **The RPMs** in Memphis for the AWA Southern tag team belts. This could put them in a position to regain the AWA World tag title they held last year, an ironic situation because the Rockers left the AWA shortly after losing the belts to **Boris Zukhov** and **Stanislaus Ustinov**. The reason: The Russians refused to give them a rematch. The Rockers then spent a few weeks in the WWF before moving on to the Continental area. They arrived in the Mid-Southern area in early October.

Tom Pritchard defeated **Tony Anthony** for the Alabama title on October 26 in Birmingham. The

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Bobby Jagers is the AWA Southern champion after winning a tournament that was held when Jerry Lawler vacated the title to defend his AWA World tag belt.

Bullet was at ringside for Pritchard and tripped Anthony, setting up the pin ... The AWA will hold a tournament for the vacant AWA Women's title on November 28 in Las Vegas. **Medusa Micelli** is the favorite to win the belt last held by WWF women's champion **Sherri Martel** ... **Bobby Jagers** won the tournament for the vacant AWA Southern belt by defeating **Billy Travis** in the final. **Jerry Lawler** vacated the belt to defend the AWA World tag title he won with **Bill Dundee**.

Nelson Royal has been named the new NWA junior heavyweight champion. The title had been held up following a match between Royal and former champ **Lazor-Tron**. Lazor-Tron has left the area ... **Mighty Wilbur** has turned on manager **Paul Jones**. When Wilbur refused to stomp his opponent after a match in Shelby, South Carolina, Jones hit him with his riding crop. Wilbur then whipped Jones into the ropes and hammered him into the canvas ... **Dino Ventura** and **Greg Gillis**, known as **The Rock 'n' Roll Rebels**, are after the Central States tag belts held by **The Batten Twins**. Ventura and Gillis were tag champions in Canada's Grand Prix Federation.

The World Class Board of Directors decided that **Kerry Von Erich** illegally interfered in **Kevin Von Erich's** victory over **Al Perez** at The

Cotton Bowl in Dallas on October 17 and has given the belt back to Perez. Kerry and **Fritz Von Erich** were at ringside for Kevin while manager **Gary Hart** and **Brian Adias** were there for Perez. During the match, Fritz got into a fight with Hart and Adias. Perez stuck his head outside the ring to help Hart but was leveled by Kerry's discus punch from the ring floor. Kevin then bodypressed a stunned Perez for the win. Kevin did not dispute the validity of the WCCW decision, but vowed that he would regain the belt from Perez.

Former wrestler **Maurice "Mad Dog" Vachon** was seriously injured



Mad Dog Vachon, the former AWA great, had to have parts of his right leg amputated after a hit-and-run automobile accident in Des Moines, Iowa.

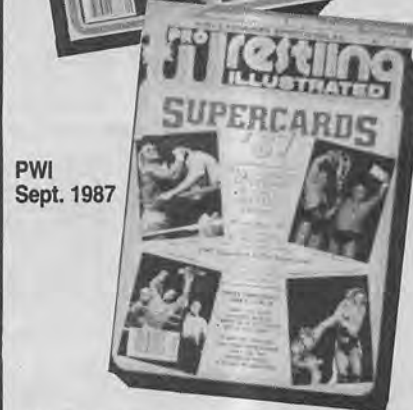
in a hit-and-run automobile accident in Des Moines, Iowa, and had parts of his right leg amputated. Vachon, a former AWA World heavyweight and tag team champion, was walking along a road when he was hit. Doctors plan to fit him with a temporary artificial leg in six to eight weeks, and later with a permanent custom-made prosthesis. Vachon also had four pins and a steel rod inserted in his badly broken left leg. The driver of the vehicle was charged with a hit-and-run.

And that's what's happening. See you at the matches! ☐

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RIC FLAIR

(Continued from page 38)



Garvin stomps away on the ex-champion, who has since stepped up his training.

and *that's* where we're going!"

Our first stop was an ultra-modern health club, which Flair opened with his own key. All was eerily quiet inside; the faint smell of sweat and anti-septic was our only companion.

"I like to work out in private," Flair said, "and it's a privilege I don't mind paying for."

One hour of stationary bicycle. Thirty minutes on the stair treadmill. One hundred laps in the Olympic-sized pool. Even in the water, I could hear him repeating the faint cry, "Nothing . . . nothing," as if to press himself harder in his training regimen.

"Now I'm ready to start working out," Flair said.

In the weight room, Flair kept up the frenetic pace. A full tour of the Nautilus equipment, with Flair only using one setting—the highest—on every machine. Then free weights, the emphasis on the chest and arms. Four hours after our arrival, Flair had had enough. I was amazed.

"Let's go running."

The secluded park will remain nameless, for obvious reasons, but that didn't make it any easier to keep up with Flair for the next two hours.

"Relaxation time," Flair said. "Let's go to the movies."

Back in one of the gym's offices, Flair had a giant TV and VCR set up, and Ron Garvin was the star. Flair, his face a picture of concentration, made note after note on a small pad as the matches replayed.



Flair runs Garvin into the ringpost. The "Nature Boy" says he's nobody without the NWA heavyweight title.

"He's mine, mine, mine. Not only will I beat the man, but I will render him unfit to do anything but wrestle preliminaries in Bulgaria afterward. Now let's go drink to that!"

Finally, I thought as we made our way to a local restaurant, some vintage Flair.

The club was full of boisterous young people. Flair took a remote corner booth near the kitchen. His club soda was untouched as he looked over his notes. "Nothing! Nothing! Nothing until ..."

Flair's discourse was interrupted by the appearance of a stunning young woman at the table. She was easily a top contender for Best-Looking Female in the Western Hemisphere that evening.

"Excuse me, but aren't you Ric Flair, the former NWA champ?" she asked.

Flair's eyes held hers. "No miss, I believe that you're mistaken," he said. "I am nobody. Now if you'll excuse me, I have notes to study. Maybe the real Ric Flair will be back here next month."

Not if Ronnie Garvin has anything to say about it. ☐

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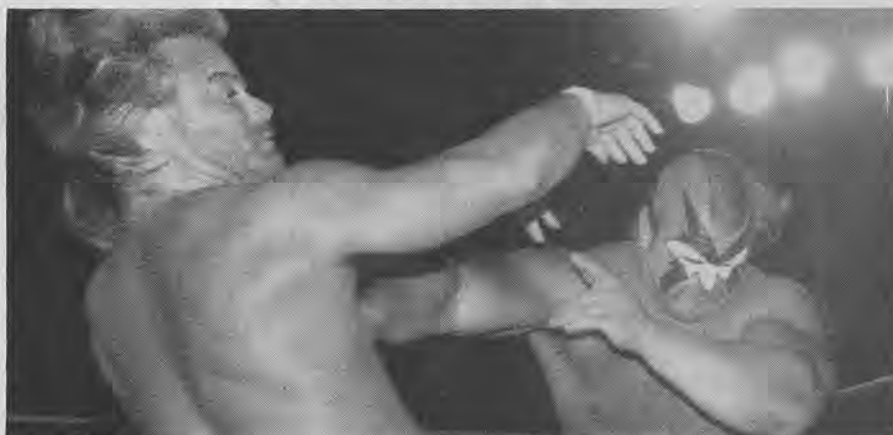
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CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

(Continued from page 10)



Road Warrior Animal shoves Stan Lane off him. The Warriors faced The Midnight Express in Pittsburgh with the U.S. tag team title on the line. The Express lost—but retained their belts—when Bubba Rogers interfered using Jim Cornette's tennis racket.

panied by a standing ovation from the crowd.

In other bouts: Carlos Colon defeated Hercules Ayala to regain the WWC Universal heavyweight title in a bloody figure-four vs. figure-four barbed wire match ... Bruiser Brody defeated Abdullah the Butcher in a dog collar match ... The Road Warriors defeated Terry Funk and Dory Funk Jr. by DQ when Terry hit the referee ... The Fantastics battled Iceman Parsons and Freebird Buddy Roberts to a draw ... The Youngbloods beat The Hunters to capture the WWC tag team belts ... Tony Atlas and The Iron Sheik wrestled to a double-countout ... The Missing Link beat Stan Hansen by DQ when Hansen hit the referee.

Pittsburgh, PA (Correspondent—David Marsh, Jr.): The Road Warriors took on The Midnight Express for the U.S. tag team title in the Pittsburgh Civic Arena. Jim Cornette and Big Bubba Rogers were in the Midnights' corner and Paul Ellering was in The Road Warriors' corner as the match began.

The bout started off with Hawk and Bobby Eaton going at it and Hawk taking the early advantage. But after Bubba taunted Hawk from outside the ring, the Warrior

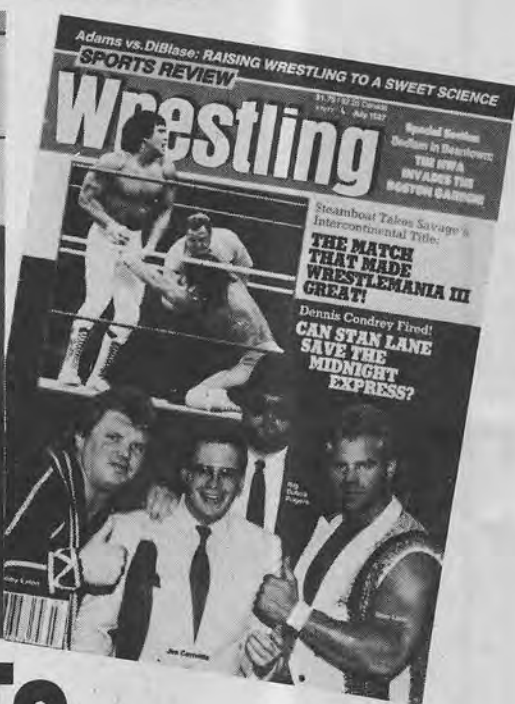
spit on Bubba. Rogers ran into the ring and bodyslammed Hawk, who in turn rose to his feet and bodyslammed Bubba. Rogers wisely and quickly retreated back to ringside.

When the match resumed, Bobby threw Hawk against the ropes and Cornette hit the Warrior in the back with his tennis racket. Eaton and Stan Lane then began tagging in and out quickly, executing devastating double-teaming maneuvers as they did so.

After struggling for about five minutes, Hawk tagged out to Animal and the Midnights were in trouble. All four men then battled it out in the ring for about two minutes until Hawk powerslammed "Beautiful" Bobby. But just when it looked like the Warriors had everything going their way, Bubba interfered with Cornette's tennis racket and the referee disqualified the Express.

In other bouts: Barry Windham battled Dick Murdoch to a time-limit draw ... Jim Garvin defeated Dory Funk Jr. via DQ ... Mike Rotundo pinned Samurai Warrior I ... Buggy McGraw defeated Spike of the M.O.D. Squad ... Ron Simmons beat The Terminator ... Todd Champion beat Samurai II ... The Warlord & Teijho Khan defeated The Cuban Connection. □

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Q & A

(Continued from page 24)



Taylor (delivering a kneedrop on Sting) has become so arrogant that he thinks he'd easily defeat Ric Flair, though he's never beaten him when it counted.

Garvin? It took him 25 years to get anywhere, and I wouldn't exactly call him a great scientific wrestler. The man is a puncher, that's all, and that's why he was able to defeat Flair.

Q: Now let's consider a hypothetical situation. Let's say you lose to Nikita at Starrcade. Then you'll be without a title again and right back where you started.

A: Wrong, Apter. Even if I lose—which I won't, so it's ridiculous to even consider—I'll be ahead of the game because I'm going in the right direction. Look at me, I'm more famous than I've ever been. The fans might hate me, but at least they pay attention to me. You know what they say, write whatever you want about me, but just spell my name right. Being loved means nothing in wrestling. The bottom line is ability and titles. I've got it now, and for me there's no turning back. ☐

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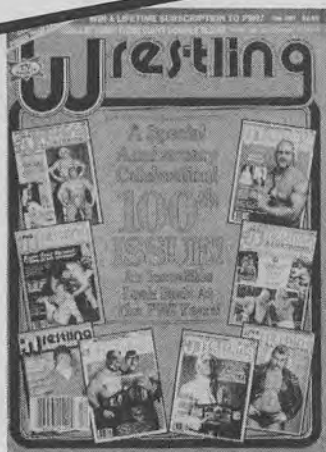
TULLY BLANCHARD and **ARN ANDERSON** win the NWA tag belts—and it's time for **THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS** to split up!

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ANDRE VS. HOGAN

(Continued from page 35)



Andre sends Hogan across the ring. Even though Andre was terribly out of shape, their *WrestleMania III* matchup was one of the most eagerly anticipated ever. They could face each other again at *The Survivor Series*, or even *Wrestlemania IV*.

Bobby "The Brain" Heenan.

It was the perfect promotion, the quintessential tussle between men literally and figuratively larger than life. Except for one detail: Andre was not the giant he was 20, 15, or even five years ago. The effects of gravity had taken their toll on his massive frame. He was heavy, misshapen, and slow. He wrestled on memory, his abilities having long since eroded. Although he gave Hogan difficulty in the beginning of the match, he could not sustain his effort throughout the entire bout. He grew tired and weak. In the end he was easy pickings for the WWF champ. And although this may have been his

greatest victory, it was not Hulk Hogan's toughest match. Any one of the 93,000 fans in attendance would attest to that.

"Andre was an embarrassment out there," claims another critic. "He could barely move. But he sells tickets. Even after all these years, everyone wants to still see him. As long as he keeps bringing them in, the promoters will promote him with enthusiasm, like he's an up-and-coming young superstar. It's a shame. There are so many more fascinating matchups than Andre the Giant vs. Hulk Hogan."

The source neglected to specify
(Continued on page 64)

Wrestling

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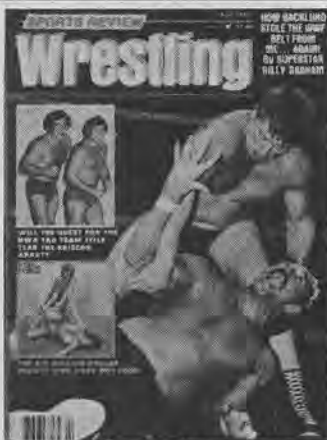
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January 1986/Savage-Santana, Abdullah, Humongous, Von Raschke, Comiskey Park, Taylor.

February 1986/Junkyard Dog, Rude, Patrick, Garvin, Reed, Datebook.

March 1986/Starrcade '85, Ventura, Windham, Sunshine, Slaughter.

April 1986/Savage-Hogan, Martel-Hansen, 1985 in Pictures, Warriors, DiBiase.

May 1986/Sammartino, R&R Express, Sunshine-Hyatt, Slater, Devastating Holds, Hall & Hennig.

June 1986/Hogan-Muraco, Midnight Express, Freebirds, Battle of Belts II.

July 1986/Orndorff-Piper, Blanchard-T.A., Matches of '80s, Shepherders, Bockwinkel, Bulldogs.

August 1986/Crockett Cup Tourney, Jake Roberts, Midnight Rockers, Von Erichs, Wrestling II.

September 1986/Bulldogs, Blanchard-Gibson, Lugar, Dundee, UWF tourney.

October 1986/Orndorff, Rude-Brody, Bash, Bockwinkel, Gordy, Adams.

November 1986/Andersons-R&R Express, Machine, Gordy, Managers.

December 1986/Machines, Fantastics, Warriors, WWF Muchnick Tourney.

January 1987/Russians, Hyatt-Dark Journey, WWF Top 50, Fab Ones.

February 1987/Road Warriors, Savage, Windham & Lugar, 1987 Datebook.

March 1987/Kamala-Hogan, Starrcade 86, Atlas, Williams, Tatum.

April 1987/1986 In Pictures, Kevin Von, Flair, Hennig-Bockwinkel.

May 1987/Nikita-Flair, Bulldogs, Albano's career, Snuka-DeBeers, Taylor.

June 1987/Hogan-Andre, Hall, Parsons, Garvin, WWF title history.

July 1987/Midnight Express, Savage-Steamboat, Adams, NWA in Boston.

August 1987/Nord-Kevin, Armstrong-Flair, Hogan & Patera, Crockett Cup.

September 1987/Hogan, Akbar, Luger-Nikita, Summer Feuds, charity shows.

October 1987/Windham, Bigelow, Bockwinkel, Western States tourney.

November 1987/Bash, Honky Tonk, Hart, Shepherders, Condrey.

December 1987/Grappling Ghouls, Hogan-Andre, Luger-Nikita, Boesch card.

January 1988/Honky Tonk, Garvin, T.A. career, Arcidi, Hogan.

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ANDRE VS. HOGAN

(Continued from page 62)



Hogan lifts Andre up for a slam (above).
The Giant aims Hogan at the ropes (below).
Andre and Bobby Heenan insist that Andre
has never been in better shape. If that's
true, Hogan's in trouble.



gan's thundering smashes. Andre is
by far the strongest man to ever
wrestle. His condition is good
enough to last the time needed for
him to beat Hogan. His ring smarts
have finally caught up with his phy-
sique. Now he knows how to better
distribute his body weight."

There is a lot of Andre to distrib-
ute. According to one report,
Andre's weight has topped 600
pounds on several occasions. The
WWF is powerless to control his
habits and must pray he doesn't eat
himself into an early grave. It would
be impudent to consider Andre in
anything but the twilight of his great
career. Although his desire remains,
he's obviously slowed down. He's
grievously out of condition.



The Giant traps Hogan against the turn-
buckle. Hogan appeared to be unbeatable
after he defeated Andre, but there are
tougher challengers ahead.

what matchups would be of more
interest. The editors of *The Wrestler*
could think of several (Bam Bam
Bigelow-Hogan, Ted DiBiase-Randy
Savage, The Hart Foundation vs. Ho-
gan & Savage), but none that would
send the general public into the tick-
et-buying frenzy seen at WrestleMa-
nia III.

Then there is the group, led by
Bobby Heenan, Andre the Giant,
and the WWF promoters who cling
to the contention that Andre is as
good as ever. "Better than ever,"
one says. "People don't understand
Andre's power. A glancing blow of
his is the equivalent of one of Ho-

Owing to his tremendous legend,
though, the question remains: Is half
a giant (or, in this case, a giant-and-a-
half) enough to capture the World
title? Is Andre capable of ever defeat-
ing Hulk Hogan? One thing is for
sure: If the match happens, whenev-
er and wherever it takes place, many
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BEST OF THE WRESTLER



WINTER 78



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SUMMER 83

BEN STRONG



JAN 73



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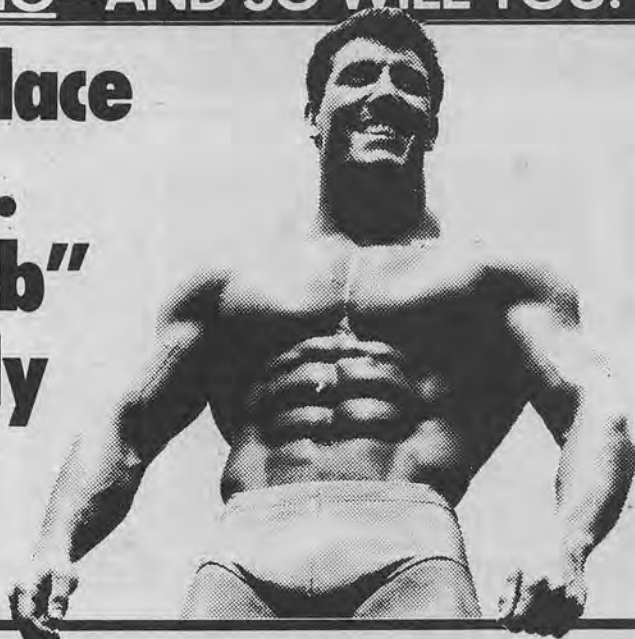
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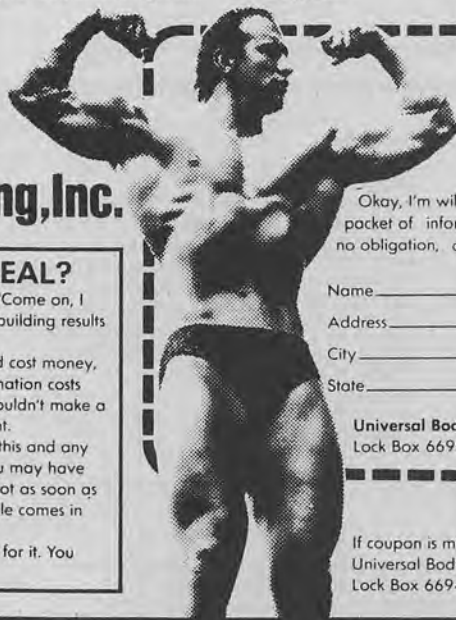
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